THE NEW
INDIAN
EXPRESS
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AFGHANISTAN SPIN A WEB AROUND ENGLAND

2019 champs slump to 69-run defeat, face prospect of finishing outside top four. A look...

AFGHANISTAN'S SECOND WC WIN

On a pitch assisting spin, Asian side pick up only their second ever 50-over World Cup win. Most of the damage was done by the spin troika of Nabi, Rashid and Mujeeb, whose combined figures read 8/104 in 25.3 overs

1 in 17 COMING INTO THE GAME, AFGHANISTAN HAD PICKED ONE WIN IN THEIR PREVIOUS 17 50-OVER WORLD CUP MATCHES

GURBAZ SETS TEMPO

Mercurial opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz did most of the early work as his rapid 80 off 57 set them on their way to the total of 284. Keeper Ikram Alikhil provided middle-order support with 58

Brief scores: Afghanistan 284 (Gurbaz 80, Ikram 58; Rashid 3/42, Wood 2/50) **bt** England 215 in 40.3 ovs (Brook 66, Mujeeb 3/51, Nabi 2/16, Rashid 3/37)

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CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Gaza situation catastrophic: UN

Netanyahu holds emergency cabinet meeting; no timeframe given on ground assault yet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AHEAD of an imminent ground assault on Gaza, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday convened the first meeting of the emergency cabinet. "If Hamas thought we would fall apart, then no: We will tear Hamas apart," he said. The Israeli troops are waiting at the border for the green signal to march to Gaza City, from where hundreds of thousands have fled to southern Gaza Strip.

Describing the situation in Gaza Strip as 'catastrophic', the United Nations Relief and Works Agency working for Palestine refugees said there is acute shortage of food, water, and medicines for children, pregnant women and elderly in the UN shelters.

Displaced Palestinians queue for bread in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza on Sunday | AFP

According to reports, hospitals in Gaza are packed with wounded people and are running low on fuel and other basic supplies. Medics have warned that thousands could die if power is not restored.

Meanwhile, Israel on Sunday reiterated its demand that those in northern Gaza must move to the southern part. It is also planning to resume water supply to southern Gaza. "This will push the civilian population to the southern (part of the) Strip," said Israel's Energy Minister Israel Katz. The move comes a week after Israel had stopped supplying water to the entire territory as part of a "complete siege" imposed on the Palestinian enclave.

On Sunday, Iran and China slammed Israel for escalating the conflict, which has claimed at least 3,600 lives so far. Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian warned the situation would go out of control if Israel sends its soldiers into Gaza. China said Israel's actions have far exceeded "the scope of self defence.

SpiceJet on Sunday brought in 320 Indian passengers from Israel under Operation Ajay. The airline will operate another flight from Tel Aviv to Delhi on Monday morning.

P9

CM to inaugurate Infosys campus today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

CHIEF Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is set to visit Visakhapatnam and Anakapalle districts on Monday to inaugurate the Infosys campus and pharmaceutical units.

After landing in the Steel City, Jagan will inaugurate the Infosys office built with ₹35 crore at Madhurwada and will later attend a board meeting.

Built with modern facilities, the centre will initially function with 1,000 employees. The presence of the IT giant is expected to give a boost to the sector in the city.

According to his itinerary, Jagan will then fly to Parwada in Anakapalle district. After interacting with public representatives, he will inaugurate a unit of Eugia Sterils Private Limited set up with ₹300.78 crore at the Jawaharlal Nehru Pharma city. After a tour of the factory, the Chief Minister will leave for the Andhra Pradesh Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Atchutapuram, where he will inaugurate a ₹421.70-crore unit of active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) at Lauras Labs. He will also lay the foundation stone for a new unit of the pharmaceutical company.

Special focus on Vizag

The City of Destiny has been in news since the beginning of the year as the Global Investors' Summit and a working group meeting of the G-20 Summit were held here.

P4

EXPRESS READ

Jawan hurt during explosion of landmine near LoC in Rajouri

Srinagar: An army man was injured on Sunday in a landmine explosion near the Line of Control (LoC) in J&K's Rajouri district. During patrol duty, rifleman Gurucharan Singh accidentally stepped over a landmine and sustained splinter injuries, said a police official. He was taken to a nearby military hospital & later was airlifted to Udhampur for specialised treatment. The army has planted landmines at the LoC to prevent infiltration of terrorists

ASSEMBLY POLLS

Cong releases first list of candidates for MP, C'garh and Telangana

ANURAAG SINGH, EJAZ KAISER & B KARTHEEK
@ Bhopal/Raipur/Hyderabad

THE Congress on Sunday released its first list of candidates for the upcoming Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Chhattisgarh.

Unrest brewed within the party ranks in Madhya Pradesh after it named candidates for 144 of the state's 230 seats, where it is eyeing to wrest power from the BJP. The list included 69 out of the party's 96 sitting MLAs. Nineteen former ministers from the previous Congress regime, including former CM Kamal Nath are on the list. The party has denied tickets to at least five sitting MLAs, including ex-Union minister Kantilal Bhuria, Shivdayal Bagri, Bramha Bhalawi, and former Vidhan Sabha speaker N P Prajapati. At least five former BJP leaders will fight on the Congress ticket. They are former Jyotiraditya Scindia loyalist Baijnath Yadav, Rao Yadvendra Singh Yadav, ex-MP Bodh Singh Bhagat, Avdhesh Nayak, and Neeraj Sharma.

Protests and resignations by party workers and leaders, who were unhappy with the candidate selection, were reported from many places in the state.

In neighbouring Chhattisgarh, the party released its initial list of 30 candidates to the 90-member House. It retained the entire cabinet team of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel but dropped as many as eight sitting MLAs.

In Telangana, after a lot of bickering and discussions, the party released the list of candidates for 55 out of 119 seats. The list had names of Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) chief A Revanth Reddy, CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, members of Parliament (MPs) N Uttam Kumar Reddy and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy.

Surprisingly, the names of TPCC campaign committee chairman Madhu Goud Yaskhi, TPCC working president Mahesh Kumar Goud and former MP Ponnam Prabhakar are absent from the list.

BJP poll committee meeting cancelled

A meeting of the BJP Central Election Committee, which was to be held on Sunday to shortlist candidates for the upcoming Assembly elections in five states, did not take place

AC installed in Naidu's cell on court orders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Rajamahendravaram

ON the directions of the ACB special court in Vijayawda, authorities of the Rajamahendravaram Central Prison provided a movable tower air conditioner in the barrack of TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday.

The former chief minister was sent to judicial remand in the skill development corporation scam on September 10 and has been lodged in the Rajahmundry Central Prison since.

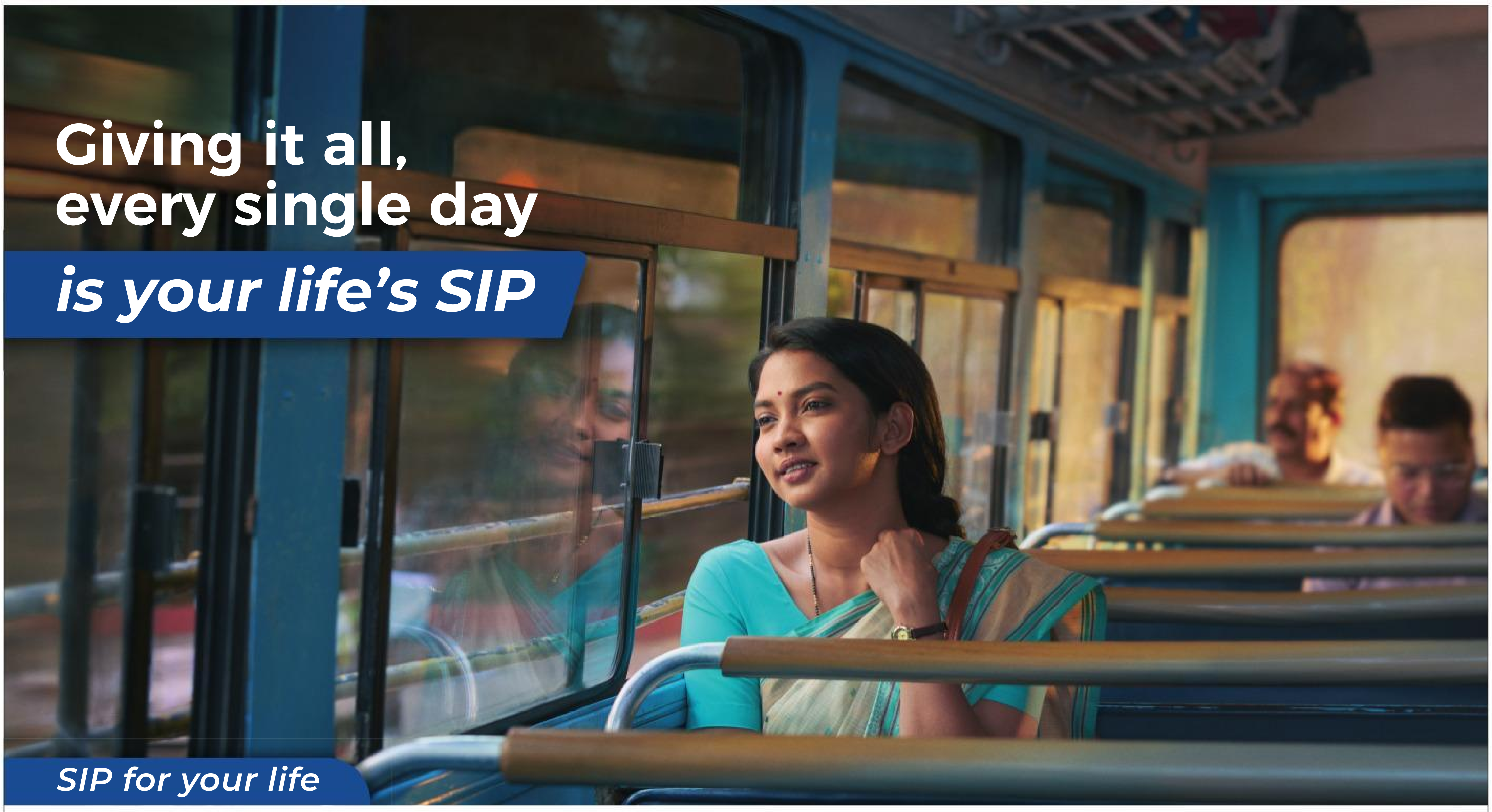
After Naidu developed skin rashes, a medical team had recommended providing a cool environment for him in his barrack. Subsequently, DIG-Prisons (coastal region) M Ravi Kiran sent a report to the ACB court on Saturday. Judge BSV Himabindu directed the prison authorities to provide a tower AC in Naidu's cell.

P4

OLY BID

FORMAL INTEREST SHOULD COME FROM NOC

While PM Narendra Modi signalled India's intention to bid and successfully host the 2036 edition of the Summer Games, officially, the declaration should come from the National Olympic Committee (NOC), IOA. Indraneel Das reports from Mumbai | P11



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ALMANAC TODAY

Monday: 16/10/2023 **Year:** Sri Subhakritu **Aayanam:** Dakshinayanam
Rutuvu: Varsha Ruthuvu **Masam:** Bhadrapada **Paksham:** Bahula **Tithi:** Vidiya 01.13 am
Nakshatram: Swathi 07.45 am **Durmuhurtham:** 06.12 am - 06.59 pm
Varjyam: 01.00(+)-02.43(+) **Rahukaalam:** 09.00 am - 10.30 am

WEATHER

MIN	MAX
25°C	32°C

FORECAST
Sunny

Sunrise	05:50
Sunset	17:35
Moonrise	06:59
Moonset	18:36

Devotees worshipping Goddess Kanaka Mahalakshmi, adorned as Aadhi Lakshmi as part of Sarannavaratri in Visakhapatnam on Sunday | **EXPRESS**

Navaratri celebrations kick off in city

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

GODDESS Kanaka Mahalakshmi, in Her 'Aadi Lakshmi' avataram, bestowed blessings upon devotees on the first day of Navaratri festivities in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. The city is abuzz with the spirit of the festival, as numerous pandals have sprung up across various streets, drawing crowds to all its temples.

Hundreds of devotees thronged to Kanaka Maha Lakshmi temple and offered Kumkumarchana to the deity. On Monday, special prayers will be offered to Goddess Kanaka Mahalakshmi, who will be adorned as Sri Dhana Lakshmi Avataram, with one lakh chrysanthemum flowers.

The Sharannavaratri celebrations of Goddess Rajashyamala commenced with grandeur at Visakha's Sri Sarada Peetham, marked by the traditional Ganapati Puja. On the inaugural day of the festival, Goddess Rajashyamala manifested as Bala Tripurasundari, and a special abhishekam was performed by Swarupanandendra Swami. The Peetham premises witnessed a mass Kumkumcharana ceremony, with the significant participation of women.

An extraordinary depiction of Goddess Durga crafted from millets has garnered attention. Local artist Moka Vijaya Kumar dedicated over 20 hours to create this unique portrayal, aligning with the United Nations' declaration of 2023 as the International Year of Millets. The artwork not only showcased the beauty of the Goddess but also carries a social message, highlighting the importance of millets during various celebrations, festivals, and special occasions. The festival fervour is palpable as Navaratri begins, and Visakhapatnam is alive with numerous activities and celebrations.

Portrait of Goddess Durga crafted using millets by Moka Vijaya Kumar | **EXPRESS**

Will make Vizag, a major tourist destination: GVL

Flags acute shortage of skilled staff in hospitality & travel sectors

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

Stakeholders from travel and tourism submitting a memorandum to BJP MP GVL Narasimha Rao in Visakhapatnam on Sunday | **EXPRESS**

AIMING at identifying the possibilities of making Visakhapatnam, a high-end destination and preparing a road map for the same, BJP MP GVL Narasimha Rao held a meeting with the representatives from travel, tourism and hotel sectors on Sunday, as part of 'Vision Visakhapatnam 2030' initiative.

The meeting was attended by AP Chamber of Commerce (Visakhapatnam chapter) chairman Srinath Chittori and CII vice-chairman Granthi Rajesh.

As part of 'Vision Visakhapatnam 2030', Narasimha Rao already held meetings with the representatives of shipping, pharma, fertilisers, chemicals and aqua sector industries from Visakhapatnam and arranged interactions of industry representatives with the Union Ministers to prepare a road map for development of these sectors in the region.

Sunday's meeting identified an acute shortage of skilled workers with hospitality, housekeeping, and culinary skills. Suggesting that the tourism sector offers a great opportunity for training and employing the local youth by creating the necessary training facilities and infrastructure, the BJP MP said he would coordinate with the government agencies for setting up such suitable facilities and infrastructure in Visakhapatnam.

He further pointed out that there are no incentives or encouragement from the State government to the tourism and hotel sector, leading to a drop in occupancy rate at hotels to 50-60 per cent, even in a big city like Visakhapatnam.

"There is a need for an integrated plan for the development of the tourism sector in Visakhapatnam region. This would require adopting innovative marketing ideas to position the city with its unmatched nature's resources and beauty as a unique destination in the country," he mentioned.

GVL Narasimha Rao also said that leveraging new infrastructure like the international cruise terminal, would help establish it as a major tourist destination not just for leisure tourism but also for eco-tourism, conference tourism and medical tourism.

Bangaru Jhansi receives Rythu Nestham award

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

VISAKHAPATNAM-based terrace gardener Bangaru Jhansi received Dr IV Subbarao Rythu Nestham 2023 award. The award was presented by former Vice President Venkaiah Naidu in a ceremony organised at Swarna Bharat Trust in Gannavaram of Krishna District under the auspices of the Muppavarapu Foundation and the Rythu Nestham Foundation.

Bangaru Jhansi, who has maintained a terrace plantation at Maadhurwada in Visakhapatnam for approximately eight years, prepares organic solutions for home crops and promotes chemical-free food. She also emphasises importance of seeds in home cultivation by sharing with people.

Former Vice President Venkaiah Naidu presenting the award to Bangaru Jhansi | **EXPRESS**

Govt urged to ensure ITDA services in tribal areas

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam:

AKHILA Bharata Vyavasaya Grameena Sangham national secretary Ajay Kumar said tribals in schedule and non-schedule areas in Anakapalle district are deprived of ITDA services as ITDA Paderu is now in ASR district after the division of the combined Visakhapatnam.

He said Anakapalle tribals want the government to clarify that ITDA services will continue to tribals in the areas of the erstwhile district. Similarly, ITDAs at Seethampeta and Rampachodavaram will continue services in Srikakulam, Kakinada and Vizianagaram.

He said notices were served to revenue official for doing mutation of surplus land of 728 as patta land in the survey number 289 in Konam in Cheedikada mandal in Anakapalle district.

However, entries in the records were not deleted and action was not taken against the officials responsible, he added.

He urged Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to take initiative to include non-schedule areas in fifth schedule so that they will get benefits.

EXPRESS READ

Half marathon marks AMC centenary fete

Visakhapatnam: On the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations of Andhra Medical College (AMC), a half marathon held in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. The run commenced at 4.30 am from Kalimatha Temple, stretching to Rushikonda and back, covering a distance of 21 km. The 10-km run was flagged off by former AMC principal PV Sudhakar and AMC vice president of sports R Sunil Kumar. For the 5-km run, the flag was waved by Dr YSR University of Health Sciences V-C K Babji, and AMC former professor Surya Prakasha Rao. AMC principal G Butchi Raju inaugurated 3-km run

Over 1.2k police deployed for CM Jagan's bandobast

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

ELABORATE security arrangements are being made for Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's visit to Visakhapatnam on Monday, according to commissioner of police A Ravi Shankar here on Sunday.

As many as 1,200 police personnel will be deployed for the bandobast during the chief minister's visit to the city for inauguration of the Infosys development Centre. Police officials were deployed for continuous monitoring of traffic and, law and order. Bandobust has been divided into different categories and each category police wing will be headed by a police official.

All precautionary measures have been taken to minimise inconvenience to people. Directions were given to police who are deployed at airport, parking, convoy, helipad and VIP security.

To ensure smooth flow of traffic, special police personnel were deployed to regulate traffic movement and curb traffic snarls.

Sniffer dog and bomb squads were also deployed to prevent any untoward incidents during CM Jagan's visit to the city.

Meanwhile, the police commissioner along with other police personnel visited the places where chief minister will be visiting and inspected the security arrangements made.

TEMPLE FETE

Tamarind tree cut down for Sirimanu Utsavam

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vizianagaram

THE authorities of Pydithalli temple, local leaders, and devotees on Sunday, axed the tree for Sirimanotsavam, the major folk festival of North Andhra, which will be held on October 31.

The temple authorities identified the tamarind tree for the festival at Jarajapupeta village in Nellimarla mandal a few days ago. Locals believe that the presiding deity Sri Pydithallamma appears in the dream of the temple priest and informs the whereabouts of the tree.

As per the temple chief priest's information, the endowment officials axed the tree for the making of Sirimanu as per the temple traditions and customs after obtaining consent from the tree owner. This year the endowment officials have identified the tree at Tummi Apparao's farmland in Jarajapupeta village.

Deputy speaker Kolagatla Veerabadhra Swamy, MP Bellana Chandrasekhar, former MP Botcha Jhansi, Nellimarla MLA Baddukonda Appalanaidu, ZP chairman Majji Srinivasarao, temple chief priest Bantupalli Venkatarao, local leaders and devotees participated in the ceremony.

Later, the temple officials shifted the trunk of the tree to the temple chief priest's house at Hukumpeta, where carpenters will carve the trunk as Sirimanu.

Speaking to the media, deputy speaker Kolagatla Veerabadhra Swamy said, "We have made elaborate arrangements for Sirimanotsavam, which is a grand procession of the 41-day festival of Vizianagaram presiding deity Pydithallamma. We are allowing devotees and common people to participate in Sirimanotsavam this year. I appeal to people to cooperate with the district administration in the smooth conduct of the annual festival."

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

16TH October : Mercury, symbol of wit and wisdom, is still in a lively zone. Given that Mercury is also the symbol of bright ideas, then I'd say this is a favourable moment for all curious and inventive people. And if you think you've never had a bright idea in your life, now is the time to begin.

ARIES
(Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
The Moon is already creating problems and challenges in your domestic life, but nothing you can't handle. Try to see partners' criticism as well-intentioned and glean what you can from their helpful comments. After all, there is a great deal of sense in their wise words.

TAURUS
(Apr. 21 - May 21)
It is difficult to escape the fact that this is a period for hard work. Lazy Taureans might therefore run into problems, whereas those of you who have a highly-developed work ethic should do just fine. But you may hold certain information to yourself. You're still keeping your secrets – and why shouldn't you?

GEMINI
(May 22 - June 21)
Every now and then the planets give you an enormous shot of energy. However, it's entirely up to you whether you use this constructively or destructively. It's important to act with maturity and self-restraint over the coming days: you'll gain respect from your friends if you do.

CANCER
(June 22 - July 23)
Venus is in a brilliant relationship with Jupiter, one which is sure to minimise personal friction. Dreams of distant places or foreign romance may be sufficient to distract you from the rigours of family life. Yet, there's still something missing, something you're still striving for.

LEO
(July 24 - Aug. 23)
It's not like a Leo to chop and change, but it does seem that events may oblige you to alter a number of deeply-held opinions. In such circumstances, flexibility can only be seen as a major virtue. If you make allowances for partners now, they'll do the same for you later on.

VIRGO
(Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
As a Virgo you know better than anyone how important it is to organise your affairs and have all your dates sorted out in advance. Yet, in a week like this, the stars are likely to have different ideas, throwing all your best plans into the melting-pot.

LIBRA
(Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
You frequently appear to be very self-contained and happy with your own company. However, appearances are deceptive and there does seem to be a strong likelihood that you will put yourself at someone else's mercy over the next few days. The question is, why? Only you can say!

SCORPIO
(Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
True, you are able to see the underlying truth of any situation better than most people, but that doesn't make it easier for you to settle disputes. Your tendency to get emotionally involved makes you a poor diplomat at the moment, so you may have to leave other people to battle it out!

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
You may still feel hard done by, but you have waited too long and worked too hard not to accept an opportunity or invitation. Especially one which will lead to promotion, or increased status in your community - or to romantic bliss. You may have to take a leap into the dark.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
Professional Capricorns may have a more intense period than those of you with purely personal schemes and ambitions to pursue. Partners' generosity, or lack of it, still holds the key. You could need to wait while they make up their minds, so be patient.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
You are an impressionable person, often believing what you are told. The message of the next few days' worth of planetary aspects, is that you should believe only what you know to be right for you. Perhaps it's fine to be a little selfish for a change.

PISCES
(Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
In spite of the fact that stressful stars are raising the possibility of a conflict or two, you are in an ideal position to sidestep such personal battles and appreciate excellent possibilities for excitement and drama. You see, what at first appears to be difficult can be turned to your advantage.

		1	4	5				2
6	8					4		
		4		1	3		6	
		8	7	2	4			6
	3			6			2	
2			1	3	8	9		
	4		6	7		5		
		6					9	7
1				8	9	6		

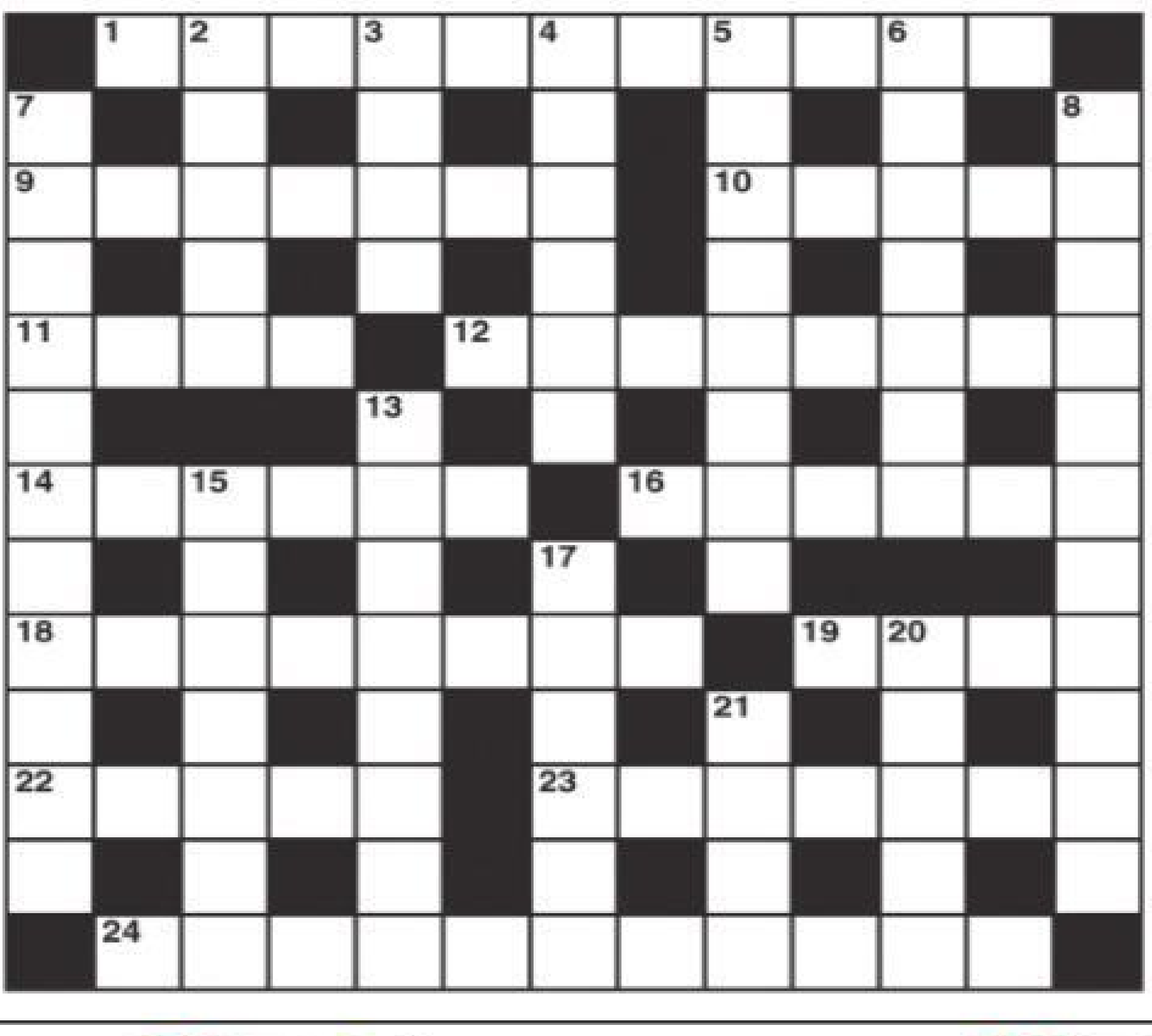
Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

9	7	6	4	1	2	8	5	3
3	2	5	7	8	6	1	9	4
8	1	4	3	5	9	6	7	2
5	8	2	6	9	7	4	3	1
6	9	7	1	4	3	2	8	5
4	3	1	5	2	8	7	6	9
2	4	8	9	6	5	3	1	7
1	5	3	8	7	4	9	2	6
7	6	9	2	3	1	5	4	8

SU DO KU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

■ Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS

1 He shouldn't leave any wrong impressions (11)
9 He's clear about fish (7)
10 It's erect whichever way you look at it (3,2)
11 The permit is to reside in Virginia (4)
12 He has a telling part in play (8)
14 Gather the woman's hellish (6)
16 She and men get involved and become engaged (6)
18 Negligent woman coming second in extremities (8)
19 It changes me in appearance (4)
22 Wakes all awry (5)
23 Prohibited sort of beard (7)
24 Will the orator be speechless if he loses it? (7,4)

DOWN

2 People's pursuits (5)
3 Certainly nothing to chatter about (4)
4 Picture again what could be exceptional reward (6)
5 Dad's backing mother for example - that's obvious (8)
6 Fit style (7)
7 Commanding location seen in new garden visit (7,4)
8 Understood to be arrested (11)
13 The most admirable debtor is one who gives (8)
15 Gratefully acknowledged (7)
17 Skilled trades in building boats (6)
20 How pointless to follow a girl in a state (5)
21 Food for a young insect (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Astray, 4 Big wheel, 9 Austin, 10 Asterisk, 12 Buck, 13 Meant, 14 Chin, 17 Desert island, 20 Relief worker, 23 Lied, 24 Scale, 25 Frau, 28 Slacking, 29 Senior, 30 Satiated, 31 Cachou.

Down: 1 Adam Bede, 2 Test case, 3 Arid, 5 In single file, 6 When, 7 Elisha, 8 Liking, 11 Reminiscence, 15 Tried, 16 Annoy, 18 Skirmish, 19 Frou-frou, 21 Clasps, 22 Pedant, 26 Skua, 27 Vera.

JUMBLE

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

ZIMEA
LNTIF
INIOCC
SORHDU

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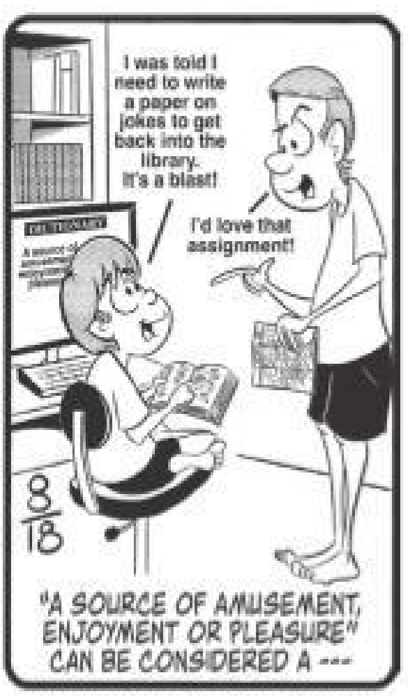


I was told I need to write a paper on jokes to get back into the library. It's a blast!
I'd love that assignment!
"A SOURCE OF AMUSEMENT, ENJOYMENT OR PLEASURE" CAN BE CONSIDERED A ---
Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

“○○-○○○-○○○○○”

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's | Jumbles: MANLY GRIME ORIOLE EXODUS
Answer: He got in trouble for telling a joke in the library after not — READING THE ROOM

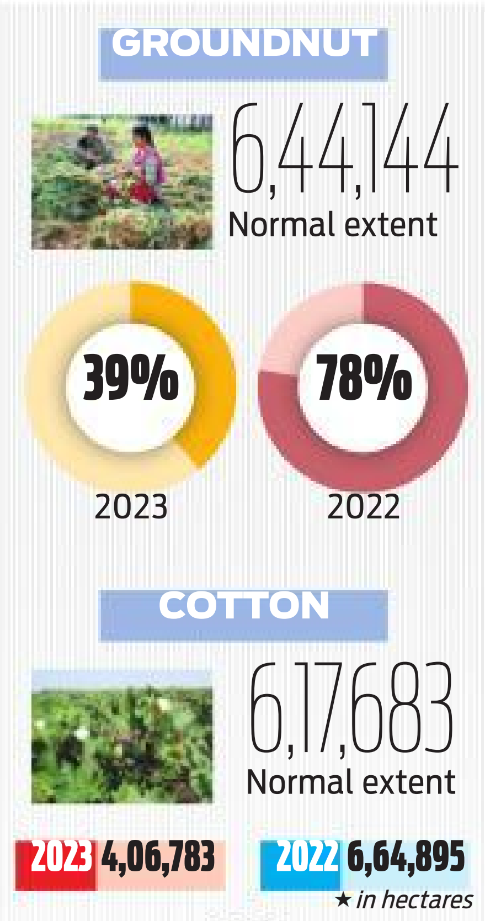
THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
ANDHRA PRADESH

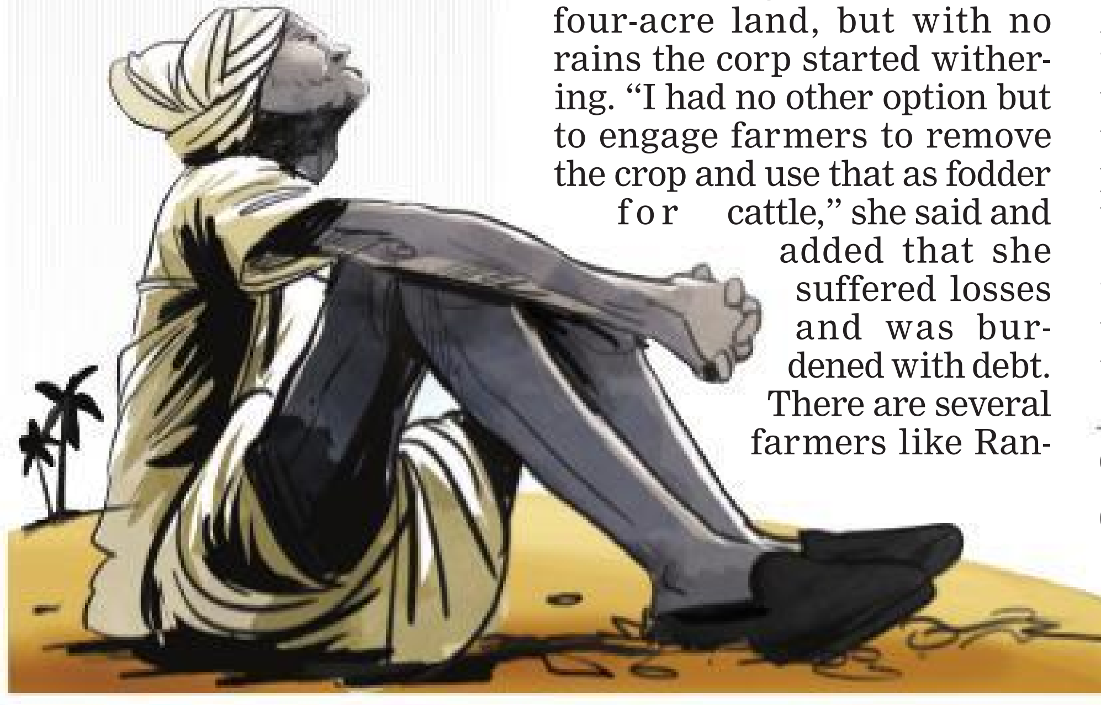
DASARA AT SRISAILAM

Dasara Mahotsavams, also known as Devi Navaratrulu, commenced with grandeur at the Srisailam temple on Sunday, under the guidance of temple executive officer (EO) D Peddiraju. It is set to culminate on October 24. The nine-day festivities began with an array of special pujas

Deficit rainfall likely to hit Kharif production

Groundnut raised in only 40% of normal crop acreage of 6.44 lakh Ha; farmers in dispair





S GURU SRIKANTH @ Vijayawada

THE production of cotton, chilli and groundnut during the Kharif season in Andhra Pradesh is likely to be hit due to deficit monsoon, opine agriculture experts.

As per the agriculture department statistics, till October 11, only 40 per cent of the groundnut crop was sown and the farmers cultivating the crop, especially those in Anantapur district, have reportedly given up hopes over the crop this season.

Rangamma, a woman farmer from Obuladevara Cheruvu mandal of Sri Satya Sai district, sowed groundnut in her four-acre land, but with no rains the corp started withering. "I had no other option but to engage farmers to remove the crop and use that as fodder for cattle," she said and added that she suffered losses and was burdened with debt. There are several farmers like Rangamma in Sri Satya Sai, Anantapur, Kurnool and Chittoor districts, who are resorting to such drastic measures. Some of them are trying to irrigate the crops with borewell water.

The total area under groundnut cultivation in the State is 6,44,144 hectares and as on October 11, only 2,55,038 hectares were sown, while on the same day last year, the extent was 5,06,554 hectares. In Anantapur district, out of total 2,31,150 hectares, only 92,461 hectares was utilised to cultivate groundnut this year, as against 1,73,613 hectare cultivated last year.

In Sri Satya Sai district, against the normal extent of 2,05,601 hectares, groundnut was cultivated in 71,671 hectares, while it was 1,97,563 hectares during the corresponding period last year. In Chittoor district, as against normal extent of 51,266 hectares, groundnut was sown in only 14,454 hectares, while it was 34,054 hectares last year for the same period. Even in Annamayya district, there is a drop in groundnut cultivation as against normal extent of 47,885 hectares, as much as 16,852 hectares was utilised for cultivation till date, while it was 27,223 hectares last year. In Kurnool, groundnut is normally cultivated in 66,568 hectares and this time it was cultivated in 37,574 hectares, while it was 43,105 hectares last year.

Officials said that they have advised the farmers to take up alternative crops and even readied the seeds for distribution, but there are less takers. What is more worrying for the farmers is that these losses do not come under any category to satisfy the norms for input subsidy.

On the other hand, cultivation of chilli, which is extensively cultivated in the Palandu region of Guntur district, has also decreased significantly.

According to Palnadu Horticulture Officer BJ Binni, the normal extent of chilli in the region is anywhere between 1.25 lakh acres to 1.5 lakh acres. "However, till date only the crop has been cultivated in around 70,000 acres, while it was between 90,000 to 1 lakh acres last year," he said.

Agriculture department statistics indicate that only 66 per cent of the normal extent of cotton has been cultivated so far in this Kharif season. As against 6,17,683 hectares of normal extent, cotton was cultivated in only 4,06,783 hectares. By this time last year, it was 6,64,895 hectares, which is more than the normal extent.

In Palandu district of the total 1,21,621 hectares, it was cultivated in 61,409 hectares till date this year, which is 50 per cent. In Kurnool district, where it is extensively cultivated, of the total 2,50,827 hectares, 1,97,045 hectares was cultivated.

GROUNDNUT (*IN HECTARES)

District	Normal extent	2023	2022
Anantapur	2,31,150	92,461	1,73,613
Sri Satya Sai	2,05,601	71,671	1,97,563
Chittoor	51,266	14,454	34,054
Annamayya	47,885	16,852	27,223
Kurnool	66,568	37,574	43,105

Chilli cultivation decreases significantly

Cultivation of chilli has decreased significantly. The normal extent of chilli in the region is anywhere between 1.25 lakh acres to 1.5 lakh acres. However, till date only the crop has been cultivated in around 70,000 acres, while it was between 90,000 to 1 lakh acres last year.

Chinkara caught on trap camera fixed at Palutla-Nekkanti Guttalachenu area of GV Palli range in Nallamala forest | EXPRESS

After five years, Chinkara spotted in Nallamala forest

IVNP PRASAD BABU @ Ongole

AFTER a few years gap, the endangered antelope species, Chinkara was sighted in the Nallamala forest area recently. The animal was last seen during the 2018-2017 period in the forest.

The Chinkara (Gazella Bennettii), also known as the Indian gazelle, is a brown-coloured small antelope species native to southern Asia, including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran.

In India, Chinkaras are mostly sighted in Rajasthan and Karnataka forests, and rarely in Nallamala's Nekkanti range and Vijayapuri South (Nagarjuna Sagar) areas. However, according to the forest officials, none of the animal was sighted after 2017-2018. Recently, the trap cameras installed to monitor the movements of wild animals, especially the big cats, captured pictures of two Chinkaras in the Ganji Vari (GV) Palli and Nekkanti areas of Paalutla forest range limits in Nallamala.

"We will increase the number of trap cameras and will monitor their population, habitation and lifestyle. We will make necessary arrangements to increase their population," forest ranger SV Subba Rao told *TNIE*.

ARAKU COFFEE FOR 'ONE DISTRICT, ONE PRODUCT' FROM ASR

USHA PERI @ Visakhapatnam

SHOWCASING globally recognised Araku Coffee as its defining product, Alluri Sitarama Raju district is ready to participate in the 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) initiative.

Making appearances at prestigious events like the G-20 Summit and the Global Investors Summit, Araku Coffee had secured the Fine Cup Award at the recent World Coffee Conference, solidifying its reputation on the international stage.

A team from Invest India visited the district on Saturday to examine the ODOP initiative. ITDA Paderu Project Officer V Abishek disclosed that they demonstrated the entire process of Araku Coffee production, including packaging and sales. The team expressed contentment with the process, and the One District-One Product label is expected to further boost Araku Coffee's reputation. Araku Coffee has been exclusively grown through organic methods since the beginning. "Local tribals have never employed chemical fertilisers, maintaining the soil's natural organic quality. This mild acidity in the soil remains unchanged due to the absence of fertilisers, resulting in a unique coffee bean texture that distinguishes Araku Coffee. This renowned coffee is celebrated as the largest tribal-grown organic coffee in the world," said ITDA Paderu Project Officer V Abishek.

In the last couple of months, the ITDA has been on a roll, adding 16,000 acres of land for cultivation and actively planting coffee. Coffee shrubs are grown under a canopy of other plants like pepper and silver oak, which not only enhances soil fertility but also makes the crop strong.

Approximately 2,40,000 tribals engage in coffee cultivation across nearly 2,50,000 acres of land and coffee harvesting primarily occurs between November and January, the optimal season for crop collection.

"In this region, only Arabica coffee is cultivated due to its suitability for the land. Besides adhering to organic practices, meticulous steps are taken to ensure quality.

Coffee beans are never dried directly on bare mud surfaces, as this can introduce unwanted earthy notes to the flavour and cause mud particles to adhere to the beans. Instead, alternative platforms like cement tiles, aluminium trays, and locally crafted bamboo trays are used to maintain the coffee's high standards and quality," explained S Ramesh, deputy director (in-charge), Coffee Board of India.

Stating that the coffee production process involves three key steps. Ramesh elaborates, "The first is estate-level processing, which includes pulping, drying, and packing. This is followed by the curing method, after which the green beans, the raw seeds of coffee cherries that have been processed but not roasted, are obtained. Finally, it goes through roasting and grinding."

EESL-AEEE MoU to boost energy efficiency

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Vijayawada

ENERGY Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and, Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE) have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to chart a course for cooperation between the two organisations, delineating vital strategies to enhance energy efficiency in various proactive states like Andhra Pradesh.

Key collaborative initiatives of the MoU delineate a roadmap for collaboration, emphasising essential areas such as information exchange, joint research, and capacity-building endeavours.

Immediate action has begun in the sphere of space cooling, where the focus lies on expediting the manufacturing and adoption of energy-efficient fans. This targeted approach underscores their dedication to immediate impact, addressing a pressing need in the country. These organisations aim to create a ripple effect, transforming the energy landscape one efficient step at a time.

During interaction with CEO of EESL Vishal Kapoor on various aspects of said MOU, AEEE chairman Sateesh informed that based on the report of AEEE ranking ie. Energy Efficiency Index for around 10 State, the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) have announced top ranking front runner States, including Andhra Pradesh, of State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI), 2021-22 which has motivated several other Non-Ranking States

EESL officials have underscored their unwavering support for AP in its journey towards heightened energy efficiency. Recognising the pivotal role energy efficiency plays in economic development, environmental conservation, and enhancing the quality of life, EESL has pledged its backing to Andhra Pradesh.

Particularly, EESL is geared to assist in the development of Visakhapatnam, a city recently designated as a growth hub by Niti Aayog, alongside Mumbai, Surat and Varanasi.

HISTORY ETCHED

Archeologist spots Neolithic rock art of stag in Palnadu village

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

ROCK bruising (etching) of a stag and man dating back to Neolithic period were spotted at Gundala-Veerlavagu valley on the outskirts of Koppunu village at Macharla mandal in Palnadu district. Archeologist and CEO of Pleach India Foundation E Sivanagi Reddy on Sunday chanced upon the rock art while conducting a survey in and around Koppunuru and Gundala under the heritage awareness campaign called 'Preserve Heritage for Posterity'. Ruins of a Vaishnavaite temple can be found on the right side of Veerula vagu, dating back to the Kakatiya period (13th century CE).

On their way back, Reddy, accompanied by local youngster M Durgempudi Yuganadhreddy and Macharla-based historian Pavuluri Satish, continued exploring the deep and narrow gorge that had a number of prehistoric rock shelters. He was surprised to find a rock bruising just a kilometre away from the ruins of the temple towards Koppunuru village.

It measured 20 cm in length and 15 cm in height.

Reddy added that there was another bruising of a human figure, delineated with stone tools and implements by the Neolithic folk during their stay at the seasonable camps. Farther away from the rock bruising, the archeologist also noticed hand prints made with white pigment, dating back to the Iron Age.

Interestingly, a few megalithic burials called cairn circles datable to around 1000 BCE were spotted in the agricultural fields. Further, the team also found remains of bricks and a broken pot called redware from the Satvahana period (1st century CE) in the fields of Koppunuru.

Reddy sensitised the local farmers about the archaeological and historical significance of the prehistoric remains and urged them to preserve them for posterity.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, No.15354386K, Ex. NK (TS) CHINTA GUNTI J ESWARA RAO S/o. SATYA NARAYANA (Late), residing at D.No. 9-7-44, Jogavanipalem, Gajuwaka, Visakhapatnam, AP-530026. My wife's name was wrongly entered as LAKSHMI instead of CHINTAGUNTI LAKSHMI (Correct Name), Date of birth 25/10/1970, vide affidavit dated 11/10/2023 sworn before Notary, Visakhapatnam.

CAUTION
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THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

ENDOWMENTS DEPARTMENT, ANDHRA PRADESH
SRI TALUPULAMMA AMMAVARI DEVASTHANAM
Lova(V), Tuni(M), Kakinada District
E-Procurement Notification
Rc.No. D1/65/2023, Dated. 15.10.2023
Open tenders invited for the work of Construction of Five Storied Raja Gopuram. Value of Estimated Cost of Rs.230 Lakhs from the eligible contractors. Last Date & Time for submission of Bids 01.11.2023, 04.00 PM Further details can be seen at tender.apeprocurment.gov.in. Contact Number: 86888 88775
Sd/- P. Viswanadha Raju,
Assistant Commissioner & Executive Officer

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD
(A Government of India Undertaking)
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
Open tender is invited through Indian Railway E-Procurement System (IREPS) for "Supply, Installation, Testing & commissioning of Indoor & Outdoor Signaling work including Alteration in existing Electronic Interlocking (EI) at Majorda station of Konkan Railway in connection with development of Majorda Station Yard incidental to RVNL Doubling work in Tinaighat - Vasco section." (Tender No. KR-KAWR-SG-ET-2023-09 Date:16/10/2023). Cost of work: ₹ 2,84,47,292/- (including GST). Last Date & Time for Submission of Bid: 06/11/2023 up to 15:30 hrs. For further details please visit: www.ireps.gov.in Place: Office of Sr. Regional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., Shirwad, Karwar-581306 (Karnataka State).

APTRANSCO :: VIJAYAWADA
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
The APTRANSCO invites bids online for 1) Spec.No.PMM11-e-42/2023 (10 Nos.tenders from 'A' to 'J'): Supply of various Testing/scientific equipment required to monitor the sub-station equipment under Operation and Maintenance (O&M) 2023-24, 2) Spec.No.PMM 12-e-43/2023: Supply of 132kV Metering Current Transformers, of ratio:200/1A, Single Core, 0.2S, Burden-5VA. Date & Time of availability of above tenders is 16.10.2023 at 5:00 PM., Website: tender.apeprocurement.gov.in Contact No.CE/Transmission : 0866-22429230.
Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER, TRANSMISSION
DIPR No.2406PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22 Dt:13.10.2023

SHRIRAM Finance
SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED
Registered Office:- Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032.
Office Address:- SHRIRAM FINANCE LTD., D.No.14-1-1/2b, II Floor, Opp. More, Zonal Office, Maharanipeta, VISAKHAPATNAM-530002.
POSSESSION NOTICE
Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of Shriram Finance Limited (formerly known as "Shriram City Union finance Limited" amalgamated with Shriram Transport Finance limited and converted as Shriram Transport Finance Limited as per the orders of NCLT Bench-II Chennai dated 09.11.2022) and thereafter obtained the approval to rename as Shriram Finance Ltd (Ministry of Corporate Finance letter dated 30.11.2022), is a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 and also registered with RBI to do Non-Banking Finance business having its registered office at Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032 under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (said Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (said Rules) issued demand notices to the Borrowers details of which are mentioned in the table below to repay the amount mentioned in the said demand notices.
The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersignedhas taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules.

S.No.	Borrower Name and Address	Amount due as per Demand Notice	Possesson Taken on
1	1. M/s Dreams Restaurant & Dabha Represented by its Proprietor: Dharmireddy Naidu Babu, S/o Nanna Babu, D.No.5-92/A, Ramannapalem Village, Atchutapuram Mandalam, Visakhapatnam. 2. Lagudu Sridevi, W/o Sudhakar, Vajragada Village, Makkavarapalem Mandalam, Visakhapatnam. 3. Geddam Prasad, S/o Geddam Pentayya, Ramannapalem Village, Atchutapuram Mandalam, Visakhapatnam.	To pay Rs.91,92,641/- (Rupees Ninty one lakhs ninty two thousand six hundred forty one only) under reference of Loan A/c No:- ANKPLTF1903290006 Demand Notice Date: 09.02.2023	12-10-2023
	Description of Immovable Property of Dharmireddy Naidu Babu & Lagudu Sridevi Vide Document No.2112/2019, Sub-Registrar of Yelamanchili:- Visakhapatnam District, Yelamanchili Sub-District, Atchutapuram Mandalam, Chodapalli Gram Panchayat and village accounts zeriothy dry land covered by S.no.92/15 out of total extent of Ac.0.71 cents an extent of Ac.0.49 cents in which an extent of Ac.0.24 cents in which an extent of Ac.0.12 cents or 0.0485 hectors or 580.8 Sq.yards or 485.62 Sq.meters of site together with House bearing D.No.2-4, assessment No.201 is Bounded by: East: Land belong to V.Srinivasa Rao (Vendor), South: Road leading from Yelamanchili to Gajuwaka, West: Remaining land of vendor (V.Srinivasa Rao), North: Land of Dharmireddy Nannababu.		

This notice is also hereby to caution the general public at large that the authorized officer of SFL is in the lawful Possession of the immovable property mentioned herein above and the Borrowers or any person shall not after receipt of this notice transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise deal with/ alienate any of the above mentioned secured assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of SFL.
Place: Visakhapatnam, Date: 12-10-2023 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Shriram Finance Limited

CUB
TRUST AND EXCELLENCE SINCE 1904
CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in, Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746
POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Properties)
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of City Union Bank Ltd., having its Administrative Office at No.24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612001 and one of the Branch Offices at 12-1-41, Ramachandra Complex, Opp. NTR Stadium, Anakapalli, Andhra Pradesh, Anakapalli Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) & (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice Dated 01-08-2023 calling upon the borrowers No.1) M/s. Computer Shopee, No.12-4-71/6, Pudimadaka Road, Cell Tower, Anakapalli, Visakhapatnam - 531001. Also at, M/s. Computer Shopee, No.12/1/47, Shop No.2, Upstair Main Road, Near Police Station, Anakapalli - 531001. No.2) Mrs. S. Vijaya Lakshmi, W/o. S. Venkata Appa Rao, No.12-4-71/6, Pudimadaka Road, Cell Tower, Anakapalli, Visakhapatnam - 531001. No.3) Mr. S. Venkata Apparao, S/o. S. Appa Rao, No.12-4-71/6, Pudimadaka Road, Cell Tower, Anakapalli, Visakhapatnam - 531001. No.4) Mr. Surisetti Nageswara Rao, S/o. Surisetti Appa Rao, No.12-4-71/6, Pudimadaka Road, Cell Tower, Anakapalli, Visakhapatnam - 531001 to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice being Rs.11,04,716/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Four Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixteen only) within 60 days from the date of the said Notice with subsequent interest thereon from 27-07-2023 with monthly rests.
The borrowers above named having failed to repay the amount despite the receipt of the above referred statutory notice, NOTICE is hereby given to the borrowers above named and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the Properties described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this 11th day of October 2023.
The borrowers above named in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of City Union Bank Ltd. for an amount of Rs.10,64,109/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Sixty Four Thousand One Hundred and Nine only) and interest thereon from 10-10-2023 till the repayment of entire dues.
The borrowers' attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
Immovable Properties Mortgaged to our Bank
Schedule - A : (Property Owned by Mr. Surisetti Nageswara Rao, S/o. Surisetti Appa Rao)
All the Site measuring an extent of 144.38 sq.yds. or 120.72 sq.mts. alone with House bearing D.No.12-4-85 and Municipal Assessment Number as 1087016626, situated on the Southern Side of Pudi Madaka Road, covered by S.No.762/2 of Anakapalli Town, within the limits of Joint Sub-Register Office Anakapalli and Visakhapatnam District and it is bounded by : GM Ward. Item No.1 Property to an extent of 126.66 sq.yds. : North : Property sold to Surisetti Jyothirmaya, East : Item No.2 Property, West : Property of Rajana Appa Rao, South : Property of Rapeti Prasad. Item No.2 Property to an extent of 35.44 sq.yds. : North: Municipal Road, East : Property of Adari Narayanamma, West : Property of Surisetty Jyothirmayya and Item No.1 Property, South : Property of Rapeti Prasad. Thus Total Site is 144.38 sq. yds. Situated in Visakhapatnam District, Anakapalli Sub-Registrar, Anakapalli Mandal, Anakapalli Municipality D.No.12-4-85, Pudi Madaka Road, Anakapalli, Visakhapatnam.
Place : Anakapalli, Date : 11-10-2023 Authorised Officer
Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001, CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287, Telephone No. 0435-2402322, Fax : 0435-2431746, Website : www.cityunionbank.com

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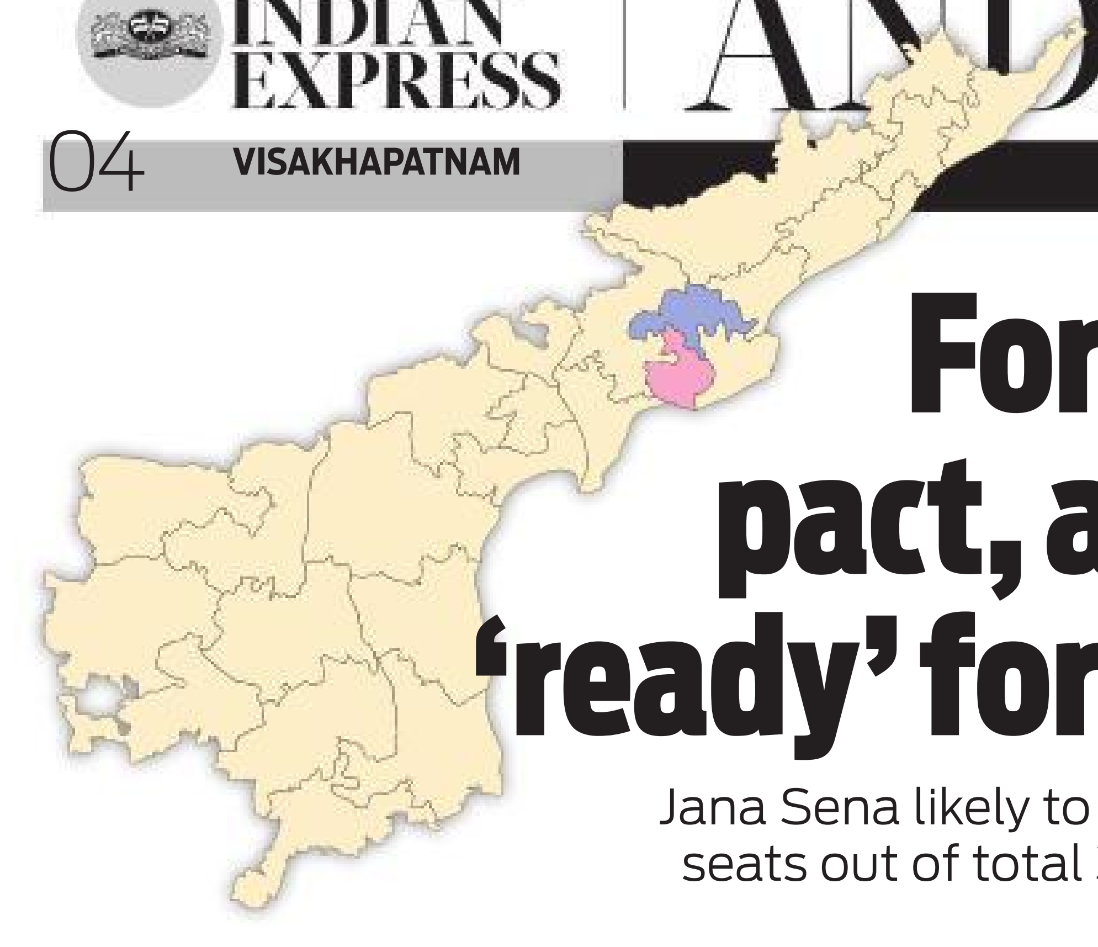
MAN KILLS FATHER

Vinukonda police arrested a 28-year-old youth for killing his father on Sunday. According to police, Satha Nayak, a resident of Seetharampuram hamlet, killed his father Harisingh Nayak on October 11 and fled the scene



For TDP-JSP pact, aspirants 'ready' for sacrifice

Jana Sena likely to seek 12 to 14 Assembly seats out of total 34 in Godavari districts

KV SAILENDRA
@ Rajamahendravaram

SEVERAL Telugu Desam leaders, including some sitting MLAs, may have to sacrifice the seat they are aspiring to contest in the undivided East and West Godavari districts following an electoral alliance between the TDP and the Jana Sena Party to defeat the YSRC.

The JSP has a strong base in the twin Godavari districts. The Kapu community, which is a dominant force, plays a key role in determining the fate of contestants in more than 20 Assembly segments in the Godavari districts. The two districts account for 34 of the total 175 Assembly seats in the State. The total number of seats in East Godavari is 19, while West Godavari has 15 seats.

Speaking to *TNIE*, Mandapeta TDP MLA Vegulla Jogeswara Rao welcomed the JSP-TDP alliance. Jana Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan announced to contest the ensuing elections in alliance with the TDP after meeting Telugu Desam supremo N Chandrababu Naidu in Rajamahendravaram Central Prison following the latter's arrest in the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) case. "The major challenge before the TDP-JSP alliance is to defeat the YSRC in the ensuing elections. We have to make sacrifices to realise our objective. I am ready to sacrifice my seat if TDP supremo Naidu directs me to do so,'' he asserted.

> **The major challenge before us is to defeat the YSRC in the ensuing elections. I am ready to sacrifice my seat if TDP chief directs me to do so**
>
> V Jogeswara Rao, Mandapeta TDP MLA

Actually, a majority of Assembly seats in Godavari districts are TDP strongholds. As per the alliance, the JSP is likely to get 12 to 14 seats out of the total 34. In the last elections, the TDP won six seats out of the total 34.

Senior JSP leader and East Godavari district president Kandula Durgesh said, "The Jana Sena leadership is likely to seek 70 Assembly seats in North Coastal Andhra, Godavari, Krishna and Guntur districts as part of the alliance with the TDP as the party is strong in the coastal belt.''

"We have identified Pithapuram, Kakinada Rural, Kakinada City, Amalapuram, Razole, Mummidivaram, Kothapeta, Rajamahendravaram Rural and Rajanagaram in East Godavari, Tadepalligudem, Tanuku, Bhimavaram, Narasapuram, Unguturu and Eluru in West Godavari to contest in 2024 as part of the alliance with the TDP. A final decision in this regard will be taken by our party chief Pawan Kalyan soon. We are ready for talks with the TDP on seat sharing,'' Durgesh told *TNIE*.

YSRC keen to bag Srikakulam LS seat

SREENU BABU PATIVADA
@ Srikakulam

FOR the YSRC leadership, which is confident of accomplishing 'Mission 175' in the ensuing Assembly elections, the selection of Srikakulam Lok Sabha candidate is likely to be a tough task.

Duvvada Srinivas, who unsuccessfully contested from Srikakulam parliamentary constituency in the 2019 elections, is an MLC now. Hence, the YSRC leadership is in search of a strong candidate for the Lok Sabha constituency.

Srikakulam Lok Sabha constituency has been a TDP bastion since the emergence of the party. The TDP has won the Lok Sabha seat seven times so far, while the Congress bagged it thrice, including a byelection.

Former Union minister Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu won the seat four times and his son and sitting MP Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu bagged it twice.

The YSRC leadership allotted the Lok Sabha seat to Reddy Shanthi, who hails from Kapu community in 2014 and to Duvvada Srinivas, who belongs to Kalinga community, in 2019.

However, both the YSRC candidates suffered defeat at the hands of Ram Mohan Naidu, who belongs to Velama community.

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had made Duvvada Srinivas as an MLC and announced to allot Tekkali Assembly seat to Srinivas family for his loyalty to the YSR family and to wrest it from Yerrannaidu's family.

According to sources, the YSRC leadership is likely to field senior sitting MLAs for Lok Sabha constituencies, who want to give their Assembly seats to their heirs.

As senior sitting MLAs Dharmana Krishna Das, Dharmana Prasada Rao and Tammineni Sitaram are planning to vacate their respective seats in favour of their sons Dharmana Krishna Chaitanya, Dharmana Rammanohar Naidu and Tammineni Chiranjeevi Nag in the ensuing Assembly elections, the YSRC leadership is likely to field one of the trio from Srikakulam Lok Sabha constituency.

However, Revenue Minister Prasada Rao is said to be uninterested in contesting the Lok Sabha election from Srikakulam constituency.

Former minister Krishna Das and Assembly Speaker Sitaram seem to be in a dilemma in accepting the offer of the YSRC leadership. However, the YSRC is determined to wrest Srikakulam from the TDP in the ensuing elections by fielding a strong candidate.

Several big ticket projects come up in Visakhapatnam

Continued from page 1

The Chief Minister has laid stones for several big ticket projects this year, including the Bhogapuram International Greenfield Airport, Adani Data Centre and Tarakarama Teerthasagar Irrigation Project.

He had inaugurated the Sea Harrier Museum on the Beach Road and indoor sports arena at MVP Colony in Vizag, besides unveiling the fish landing facility in Bheemili.

On August 1, Jagan visited the city to lay foundation for the ₹350-crore Inorbit Mall being built by the Raheja Group and inaugurated various facilities, including the incubation centres set up at Andhra University with ₹130 crore.

Collector A Mallikarjun, GVMC chief Saikanth Varma and Police Commissioner A Ravi Shankar inspect arrangements for CM Jagan's visit, in Vizag on Sunday | EXPRESS

TDP sets up coordination committee

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

THE TDP has formed a five-member committee as per the direction of party chief N Chandrababu Naidu to coordinate and cooperate with the Jana Sena Party (JSP). The two parties have entered into an alliance for the ensuing elections.

The committee consists of TDP State president Kinjarapu Atchannaidu, Politburo member and Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Yanamala Ramakrishnudu, Uravakonda MLA and PAC Chairman Payyavula Keshav, former minister Pithani Satyanarayana and former MLA Tangirala Sowmya.

The Jana Sena has already constituted a coordination committee headed by Political Affairs Committee chairman Nadendla Manohar. Both the parties are likely to meet and chalk out the future course of action after Dasara.

Atchan sees big conspiracy behind arrest of TDP chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

TDP State president K Atchannaidu on Sunday said there was a big conspiracy behind the arrest of party supremo N Chandrababu Naidu in the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation case.

Speaking after taking part in the Nyayaniki Sankellu protest organised by the TDP denouncing the arrest of Naidu in the skill development case, Atchannaidu claimed that the AP-CID had failed to establish corruption of a single rupee in the skill development project even 37 days after Naidu's arrest. "The former Chief Minister should be treated at AIIMS for his skin allergy. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan should be responsible if anything happens to Naidu in Rajamahendravaram Central Prison,'' he said.

"The police are preventing TDP cadres from staging peaceful protests against Naidu's arrest. TDP activists are likely to be arrested in view of Jagan's scheduled visit to Visakhapatnam on Monday," Atchannaidu said. TDP district president Palla Srinivasa Rao, former minister Ganta Srinivasa Rao, MLCs Duvvarapu Rama Rao and V Chiranjeevi Rao and others participated in the 'handcuffs' protest.

Ganta said they sought an appointment with the Chief Minister during his visit to Vizag. He said they would make a representation on Polavaram, Uttarandhra Sujala Sravanthi, metro rail project and development of the backward Uttarandhra region, which were ignored by the YSRC government in the last four-and-a-half years. TDP MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu, former minister Bandaru Satyanarayana Murthy and others were present.

LONDON MEET

Accomplish 'Mission 175', YSRC media activists told

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

YSRC State media and social media convener Sajjala Bhargav Reddy has asserted that the party will achieve a landslide victory in the ensuing elections.

Addressing a get together meeting of YSRC social media activists in London, Bhargav Reddy said, "Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is striving for the development of the State and welfare of the people. It is the responsibility of the social media activists to strengthen Jagan's hands to eradicate corruption in the State."

Outlining the action plan for the party social media activists in the coming days, Bhargav Reddy said the ultimate target of the party is to win 175 out of 175 seats. "We have to strive to make it happen," he asserted.

The meeting was attended by 450 social media activists of the party from across the United Kingdom.

Party convener in the UK Chinta Pradeep Reddy and YSRC leader Obul Reddy presided over the meeting. Andhra Pradesh Non-Resident Telugu Society (APNRTS) president Medapati Venkat, APSSDC Advisor Challa Madhusudhan Reddy and several others participated in the meeting.

Be humane towards Naidu: PK to govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

JANA Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan condemned the 'indifferent' attitude of the YSRC government towards TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, who was arrested in the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) case.

"Negligence on the part of the government with regard to the health of former Chief Minister is not acceptable," he observed. In a press release on Sunday, Pawan Kalyan said the government should be humane and consider the advance age of the TDP chief and his health issues.

"The YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government should desist from adopting a vindictive attitude towards its political opponents," Pawan Kalyan said, while denouncing the adverse comments of YSRC leaders and the Prisons Department officials.

The JSP chief said the court should intervene in the mater and ensure that the government takes necessary steps to address the health issues of Naidu, who is lodged in Rajamahendravaram Central Prison.

TDP general secretary Nara Lokesh and his wife Brahmani, and mother Bhuvaneswari take part in the Nyayaniki Sankellu protest on Sunday against the arrest of former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu in the skill development case | EXPRESS

Naidu stable, says latest health bulletin

Continued from page 1

According to the jail manual, there is no provision for providing ACs for prisoners.

As per the latest medical bulletin released by prison authorities, Naidu's health condition was stable, his physical activity was marked as 'good' and his weight stood at 67 kilograms.

TDP stages Nyayaniki Sankellu protest

Meanwhile, TDP leaders on Sunday took up another demonstration, 'Nyayaniki Sankellu', against the "illegal" arrest of their leader. As part of the protest, Naidu's wife Nara Bhuvaneswari, son and TDP general secretary Lokesh and daughter-in-law Brahmani tied their hands with ropes for five minutes from 7 pm to 7.05 pm.

While Bhuvaneswari participated in the protest along with former ministers N Chinarajappa and Butchaiah Chowdary, and women activists at the party's Vidyanagar campsite in Rajamahendravaram, Lokesh and Brahmani took part in the programme at their residence in Hyderabad.

Reiterating that his father's arrest was illegal, Lokesh alleged that Naidu's life was under threat in the jail. He accused the State government of "acting in the most dubious way despite the deteriorating health of the TDP chief."

Meanwhile, TDP AP unit chief K Atchannaidu demanded that Naidu be shifted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

No one's hand behind former CM's arrest: YV

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Visakhapatnam

YSRC regional coordinator YV Subba Reddy on Sunday said there was no role of the State government in the arrest of TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu in the APSSDC case.

Addressing a meeting of the YSRC, he said the former Chief Minister was facing charges in several cases. Highlighting the development initiatives of the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government in Vizag East Assembly constituency, he said the highest number of 30,000 house pattas were given to the eligible poor. "As many as 1.15 crore people have got the benefit of various welfare schemes in the State. Jagan is committed to fulfilling all his election promises. The old age pension will be increased to ₹3,000 from January benefiting lakhs of people,'' he said.

MP MVV Satyanarayana underlined role of party conveners and Gruha Saradhulu in the victory of YSRC in the ensuing elections. YSRC cadre, conveners and Gruha Saradhulu should highlight the development programmes and welfare schemes of the YSRC government during the 40-day outreach programme of 'Why AP needs Jagan?'. They should effectively counter the false propaganda unleashed by the Opposition TDP in the State, he said.

Subba Reddy was felicitated at the meeting. MLCs P Ravindra Babu and Varudu Kalyani, YSRC district president Kola Guruvulu were present.

'Helmet Must' launched to curb mishaps

S NAGARAJA RAO @ Kadapa

THERE is a steep increase in the number of road accidents in the district due to not wearing helmet since 2019 on State and National Highways. The number of deaths has been increased despite a jump in the number of cases against helmet rule violators.

In a bid to reduce the rate of accidents, district police has launched 'Safety First - Helmet Must' programme and organising various programmes to create awareness among riders. Police have been explaining the importance of wearing helmet. According to the data, 48 persons have lost their lives in road accidents in 2019, 63 in 2020, 57 in 2021, 51 in 2022 and 130 till date this year. Police also found that riding on sports bikes with full speed is also one of the reasons for accidents.

LOCAL ARTISTRY

Venkatagiri sarees from Nellore for ODOP

D SURENDRA KUMAR @ Tirupati

THE world-famous Venkatagiri sarees which has achieved the coveted Geographical Indication (GI) tag, and now it has been standing as a contender for the prestigious 'One District One Product' (ODOP) Award-2023.

This recognition, bestowed upon locally-made products, aims to provide them with a national platform for promotion. The Invest Inida team committee, responsible for evaluating nominees, is set to arrive on October 17 to assess the local artistry. District Collector K Venkataramana Reddy announced Jigisha Tiwari Mishra, a representative of Invest India team committee, will visit Venkatagiri region for examining the development of handloom products, including the world-famous Venkatagiri sarees.

Mishra's visit involves engaging in face-to-face discussions with the handloom workers who have benefited from various government schemes.

The committee plans to submit detailed reports to the Centre, with high hopes of securing the ODOP Award for the Venkatagiri handicrafts.

The legacy of Venkatagiri sarees dates back to the 1700s when they were initially produced by the Nellore Velugoti dynasty, said the collector.

In 1992, SPKM Indian Institute of Handloom Technology was built in Venkatagiri under the Union Ministry of Textiles. Covering an expansive 25-acre and administered by the Andhra Pradesh Handlooms and Textiles Commissioner, this institution offers various courses in handloom and textile technology, creating employment opportunities for artisans.

The State government has played a vital role in supporting the local handloom industry. Through the 'Netanna Nestham' scheme, an annual modernisation grant of ₹24,000 has been allocated for the past five years to each handloom-dependent worker.

The National Handloom Development Corporation has facilitated the supply of yarn and silk at reasonable prices, further boosting the sector.

Invest India team to examine handloom products

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TELANGANA/SOUTH

SIX HELD Task Force team apprehended six people for gambling at Jakkaloddi village, Telangana, and confiscated a total of ₹53,750 in cash, six mobile phones, one autorickshaw, and four bikes

BRS on the tenterhooks as key leaders from Khammam leave party

B SATYANARAYANA REDDY @ Khammam

THE Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) seems to be in a difficult position in the erstwhile Khammam district with a number of senior leaders and corporators leaving the party.

If BRS' survey reports are any indication, the pink party has identified four districts, including Khammam, where it is facing issues.

Analysts say that with former minister Thummala Nageswara Rao joining the Congress, the grand old party has further consolidated its position in the district. Notably, the region has traditionally been a stronghold for the Congress. As reported in these columns, Nageswara Rao revealed that he would contest on a Congress ticket from Khammam, which is currently held by BRS' Puvvada Ajay Kumar, who is also the transport minister.

Analysts believe that the former minister would spare no expense to ensure that the Congress secure the seat.

Corporators — Chava Madhuri, Narayana Rao, Kamarthapu Murali, Ravuri Murali and others — tendered their resignation from the BRS on Sunday and anounced to join the Congress. Many more corporators and senior leaders from the party will leave the party in the coming days, a source said.

BRS Khammam president K Murali, who left the party on Sunday, considers Nageswara Rao his "political guru".

He stated that a large number of development works were carried out during Nageswara Rao's tenure as minister. Along with four other corporators, he told the media that they would work to ensure that Nageswara Rao wins in the upcoming elections. Analysts said that the recent defection of senior local leaders would come impact the morale of cadre.

Poll scenario changed

Analysts claimed that until yesterday, people were of the view that the BRS was in pole position in Khammam, but the resignations have affected the party's chances here

KCR releases poll manifesto, hikes pension

BRS chief brings KCR Bima-Prati Intiki Dheema, free insurance cover of ₹5 lakh to around 93 lakh BPL families

VV BALAKRISHNA @ Hyderabad

BRS supremo and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao speaking at a public meeting held in Husnabad, Siddipet district on Sunday | EXPRESS

BY including several new schemes in the BRS election manifesto, which he released on Sunday, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao tried to not only please all sections of the society but also score over the Congress, which announced six guarantees for the people of Telangana.

While increasing the amounts for the ongoing schemes like Rythu Bandhu and Aasara pensions, the BRS president announced new schemes like -- KCR Bima - Prati Intiki Dheema, free insurance coverage of ₹5 lakh to around 93 lakh BPL families, Soubhagya Lakshmi to provide ₹3,000 maintenance amount to eligible women, Telangana Annapoorna Pathakam for providing fine variety of rice and providing domestic gas refill at ₹400. However, there was no mention of number of cylinders to be given per year.

While the Congress promised to give ₹2,500 per month to women, the BRS announced ₹3,000 per month. The Congress assured to provide domestic gas refill for ₹500. The Congress assured to give ₹15,000 to farmers, whereas the BRS announced Rythu Bandhu will be hiked to ₹16,000. The grand old party assured ₹10 lakh under Rajiv Aarogyasri, the BRS ₹15 lakh under Aarogyasri. While the Congress promised ₹4,000 monthly pension under Cheyutha scheme, the BRS assured to hike the Aasara pension to ₹5,000.

Reacting to the BRS manifesto, TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy quipped: "It is not an auction for arrack shop". The BRS leaders, however, alleged that the Congress copied their ongoing schemes. But, the BRS took a leaf out of Andhra Pradesh government's policy, which hiked the social security pensions every year.

Burden on exchequer

However, the new schemes and enhanced existing schemes burden the exchequer by around ₹20,000 crore per year and the welfare budget may touch close to ₹1 lakh crore out of ₹3 lakh crore budget of the State. But the BRS leaders averred that they have an idea of the State's economy.

'Cong could not bring change in over 50 years'

P KRISHNA @ Siddipet

BHARAT Rashtra Samithi (BRS) president K Chandrasekhar Rao urged the people of Telangana to not fall for the 'lies spread by the Congress'. He pointed out that the grand old party, despite being in power at the Centre for over 50 years, failed to bring about significant change anywhere — be it the streets or the nation's capital, New Delhi. "Now, they seek another chance to perform miracles," he said.

KCR was speaking at the launch of BRS' election campaign from the Husnabad constituency in Siddipet district on Sunday. Addressing the gathering, he wondered how different the situation would have been if the Congress had implemented a scheme like Dalit Bandhu, 60 years ago. He emphasised that the persistent poverty among Dalits was due to a lack of sincerity in governance and inadequate policies.

"Some parties are asking you to give them a chance. But they were given 10 chances earlier. You people (referring to the Congress) ruled for 60 years from here till New Delhi (from State to Centre). Even after 75 years of Independence, there is poverty in this country, which is disgraceful," he said.

The chief minister highlighted that people faced difficulties with power supply during the Congress' regime. "Uncertainty prevailed over when electricity would be available and when it would be cut off," he added. He mentioned how transformers and water pumps used to frequently fail, but that's no longer the case, and repair shops for water motors have closed down.

> **There was once a severe water shortage in Husnabad. Even after drilling boreholes up to 800 ft, there was no water. Now it is lush & green after repairing the Mahasamudram Gandi**
>
> KCR, BRS chief

Seven of family killed as car collides with lorry in TN

PRAVEENA S A @ Tiruvannamalai

SEVEN of a family, including two children and a woman, from Bengaluru were killed in a road accident on the Krishnagiri-Tindivanam National Highway (NH 77) near Chengam in Tiruvannamalai district on Sunday morning. Police said the accident happened when R Sathish Kumar, who was driving the car, lost control of the vehicle, entered wrong lane, and collided head-on with a lorry coming from the opposite direction.

While V Srinivasan (60), S Malar (58), S Manikandan (37), S Hemanth Kumar (36), R Sathish Kumar (40), and his two children, S Sarveshwaran (6) and S Sidhu (3), died on the spot, Kavya (35), wife of Sathish Kumar, is undergoing treatment at Tiruvannamalai Government Medical College Hospital for critical injuries.

According to police, the accident happened around 8.30 am when the victims were on their way back to Bengaluru after visiting the Sri Malayanur Angala Parameswari Temple in Villupuram district. Chengam DSP Thenmozhivel said, "Due to construction work, the NH stretch near Chengam does have not a concrete median. The accident happened as the car entered the wrong lane and collided with the lorry coming from opposite."

Chief Minister M K Stalin conveyed his condolences and announced ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and ₹1 lakh for the injured woman.

CIVIC ACTION

Branches were chopped near the High Court as a precautionary measure ahead of retreating monsoon in Chennai | P RAVIKUMAR

BJP chalks out three-pronged strategy to capture power in TS

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY @ Hyderabad

AS the election day nears, the BJP is believed to be chalking out a three-pronged strategy to capture power in the State.

According to sources, the saffron party has divided the 119 Assembly segments into three categories and devised three different plans to win maximum number of seats in these constituencies.

The party will be focussing on 30 segments under its plan 'A'. These segments include Huzurabad, Dubbak and Goshamahal, which are currently represented by the BJP MLAs in the Assembly. The plan is to go all out with its campaigning and election management with the main objective of winning at least 20 out of 30 seats. Senior leaders, including present and former MPs, MLAs and MLCs will be visiting the segments and campaign for the party.

The BJP will be concentrating on 30 other segments, where it secured significant vote share in the last elections, under its plan 'B'. In these segments, top leaders and prominent personalities will be launching a series of poll campaigns. The party's election management teams too would be visiting these constituencies. It will be looking into the factors that helped in giving a good fight to the BRS and Congress candidates in the previous elections and find ways to further improve its performance this time to win at least 10 to 15 seats.

The BJP's plan 'C' also focuses on 30 segments where, besides strengthening its traditional vote bank, it will also try to welcome on board the dissident leaders from the Congress and BRS. The party plans to field these leaders in segments where it has no strong leaders and try to split votes so that it can see some electoral gains.

The saffron party is hoping to be a game changer in Telangana politics if a hung Assembly is in place after the upcoming elections.

Financial assistance for candidates

The party is also believed to be planning to provide some financial aid to its candidates in order to help them carry out campaigns without any drawbacks and win a good number of votes, which will augur well for both the candidates as well as the party in future

Vizhinjam port holds vast potential: Pinarayi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ T'Puram

CHIEF Minister Pinarayi Vijayan waved the green flag to welcome the first ship at Vizhinjam International Seaport, in Thiruvananthapuram, on Sunday. Tugboats accorded a water salute and led the Chinese ship, Zhen Hua 15, to near the berth at a grand ceremony unhindered by rain. Emphasising the significance of the project, the CM said it is one of the state's greatest contributions to the country.

"The Vizhinjam project is a testament to the fact that nothing is impossible if everyone comes together. This port is a rarity. The potential it offers is beyond our comprehension," Pinarayi said, while inaugurating the reception. According to the CM, the port project shores up the government's efforts at improving the quality of life in the state. He also spoke about overcoming challenges, including the opposition by international and commercial lobbies, that delayed the project. Pinarayi said the project will be commissioned in the next five to six months.

Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan recalled the leadership of former CM Oommen Chandy on the port project. "Oommen Chandy took the bold decision to go ahead with the project." he added.

Rain fury: Orange alert issued for 4 Kerala districts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ T'Puram

KERALA is on high alert with the India Meteorological Department predicting isolated heavy rainfall till Tuesday. Orange alert has been issued for four districts — Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, and Idukki — on Monday, with the rest of the State placed under yellow alert. On Tuesday, a yellow alert has been declared for all districts, except Kannur and Kasaragod.

Thunderstorms with lightning accompanied by gusty winds, with speeds reaching 30-40kmph, are likely to occur at one or two places in the state from October 19. Fishermen have been advised not to venture out to sea. Weather experts are of the view that the intensity of the rainfall will drop after Tuesday, although light to moderate rainfall cannot be ruled out. "There will be rainfall across the state, though the central and northern districts are likely to get more rainfall, till Tuesday. There could even be a short dry spell after that," said Rajeevan Erikkulam, a meteorologist.

EXPRESS READ

Father-son duo electrocuted in farm

Siddipet: A man and his son were electrocuted at a field located in Zaligama village of Gajwel mandal in Siddipet district on Sunday after they accidentally came in contact with a live wire. The victims have been identified as 58-year-old K Kanakaiah and his son, 28-year-old Bhaskar. They had gone to the farm for agricultural work when the incident took place

KSRTC to launch 15 new electric buses

Kochi: Industries Minister P Rajeeve said KSRTC's 15 electric buses will soon begin circular services in Kalamassery. The transportation service to the PWD guest house, Ernakulam Government Medical College, Cochin Cancer Research Centre, Cusat, Government Polytechnic College, Government ITI, and Thrikkakara temple will be improved

Fight over TV remote leads to death of teen

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chitradurga

A fight over a TV remote resulted in the death of a 16-year-old boy when his father hurled a scissors at him at Molakalmuru town in Chitradurga district on Saturday.

The scissors pierced the boy's throat and he bled to death. The deceased has been identified as Chandrashekhar, the elder son of Lakshman Babu.

It is said that Chandrashekhar and his brother Pawan Kumar, 14, were fighting for the remote to watch a TV show. Enraged by this, Lakshman Babu, a paralysis patient, hurled the scissors at Chandrashekhar.

Chandrashekhar's mother Lakshmi rushed him to the taluk hospital at Molakalmuru.

The police have taken Lakshman Babu into custody.

E-MAIL TRAP

Fraudsters make a killing as shopping sites announce special offers

PRIYA RATHNAM @ Hyderabad

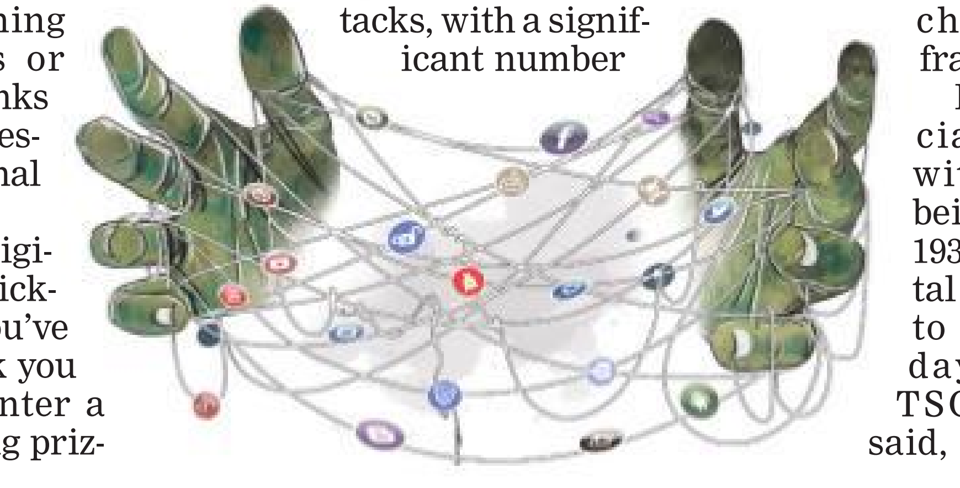
WITH the festive season approaching, online shopping platforms are announcing special offers and discounts to entice consumers. However, this festive season has also turned into an opportunity for fraudsters, who are actively working to exploit the enthusiasm of shoppers.

Platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Nykaa and Ajio are rolling out a plethora of discounts and deals in anticipation of festivals such as Dasara, Diwali, Christmas and New Year's. These discounts often range from 10% to 90% on a variety of products and accessories. Promotional events like the Great Indian Festival on Amazon, the Big Fashion Festival on Myntra, and the Big Billion Days on Flipkart were live in the first and second weeks of October.

However, on the flip side, cybercriminals are deploying phishing emails and duplicate websites to deceive unsuspecting consumers.

An inspector with the Telangana State Cyber Security Bureau (TSCSB) said, "This is the season when fraudsters are particularly active because the high volume of sales due to the enticing offers presents them with numerous opportunities. Mobile users must exercise caution and avoid opening any phishing e-mails or clicking on suspicious links received via e-mail or messages promising additional offers."

"It's important to be vigilant and refrain from clicking on links that claim you've won a lucky draw or ask you to click on a link to enter a lucky draw with enticing prizes," he added. The allure of discounts and offers is irresistible to avid shoppers, but it also attracts cybercriminals. The TSCSB has received numerous reports of cyberattacks, with a significant number of these being attempts at fraud. These incidents range from the creation of fake websites and links to providing fraudulent service centre contact information, all orchestrated by fraudsters.



However, officials said that with awareness being spread, the 1930 toll-free portal receives close to 70 calls each day. A senior TSCSB official said, "We've seen a rise in cyber complaints during the festive season, with victims suffering financial losses when making online purchases. Companies like Flipkart and Amazon are enticing customers with deals on their products through their websites and applications, and opportunistic fraudsters are taking advantage of these promotions to deceive unsuspecting individuals."

Several cyber divisions of city commissionerates are conducting awareness programmes within their jurisdictions to curb these crimes.

EDITORIAL

VISAKHAPATNAM, MONDAY 16.10.2023

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

newindianexpress●com

There are many problems, but I think
there is a solution to all these problems;
it's just one, and it's education

Malala
Yousafzai

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN
INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.
— **Ramnath Goenka**

RETRIBUTION's KISS OF LIFE TO BIBI's FLAGGING POLITICAL CAPITAL

HAMAS may have committed a tactical blunder by perpetrating the worst massacre of Israelis since Holocaust. A week is a long time in politics. Until 7/10, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was on a self-destruction mission as his muddled far-right alliance got him to legislatively render the judiciary powerless. At a time when the nation was staging an unprecedented revolt against him, last week's mass murder by Hamas turned his fortunes around, served to unite the fractured polity and forge a unity government. The new allies gave Netanyahu the balance he needed to ward off pressures from his nutty far-right partners. From a reviled politician, Netanyahu is now the man of the moment. He may yet pay the price for the embarrassing intelligence failure but things could change if the barbarity is comprehensively avenged and pogrom deterrence after Holocaust is decisively restored—Never Again.

Sensing the opportunity, Netanyahu is about to order a ground assault in Gaza after pulverising entire neighbourhoods there through aerial bombings. The operation has already killed more than 2,200 in Gaza, but for him the war has just begun. Ahead of putting boots on the ground, his military ordered the immediate evacuation of an estimated 1.1 million people from northern Gaza. It led to an exodus though Hamas advised people to ignore the order. The uprooting of women and children with no roof to call their home amid a blockade of food, water and fuel amounts to penalising civilians for the actions of militants, which is illegal under international law. Yet, apart from the UN and some Muslim nations, there has been little adverse reaction from the global community to the forced migration. The US, in fact, tacitly approved the ground assault by saying Israel has a legitimate right to ensure 7/10 never ever happens while protecting Palestinian civilians. It may be argued that Hamas was avenging the Israeli land grab and other atrocities in the West Bank, but 7/10 can never be justified. As US President Joe Biden said, Hamas's brutality made Al-Qaeda look pure.

The ground assault is meant to smoke Hamas out of its bunkers and tunnels, where it is hiding the hostages it took from Israel. Hamas successfully brought the Palestinian issue to the front burner but it can only blame itself for its overkill if the Israeli operation against it does not go sideways.

MAKE THE AVIATION BUSINESS COST-EFFECTIVE

INDIA needs a thriving aviation sector, but for that to happen it has to ensure one or two players do not dominate the sector. Currently, there is a clear duopoly with IndiGo and Tatas (through Air India, Air Asia and Vistara) enjoying 90 percent of the market share. The two big players strengthened their grip over the market after Go Air went out of business in May this year. Meanwhile, SpiceJet, which has been struggling with its finances, and Akasa, which has been seeing many of its pilots leave, keep losing their market share to the big two. While smaller players need to get their houses in order to thrive in the business, the government must ensure the cost of airline operations does not go through the roof.

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) costs account for around 40 percent of the operation costs of airlines in India. While international crude oil prices have a direct bearing on the ATF prices, high and complex taxes on ATF in India make the situation worse for airlines. There have been demands to bring ATF under the Goods and Services Tax. This will serve two purposes—taxes will be lower and airlines will be able to claim input tax credit on GST paid on fuels. The government must also ensure that airports do not charge unnecessary fees from airlines or passengers. An airline spends 8-10 percent of its total expenses on airport charges such as landing fees, parking fees and aerobridge fees. The aviation industry, along with the government, also needs to find a solution to the skill deficit in the industry. Indian airlines are severely constrained by the shortage of pilots, and the same was evident from the recent crisis in Akasa Air. India needs to develop domestic capabilities for aircraft maintenance and repair. Engine problems and a shortage of mechanics ensure over 20 percent of airlines remain grounded.

The aviation sector is a difficult business to be in. Scores of airlines, including big names such as Jet Airways and Kingfisher, have shut shop. A strong aviation sector can propel growth for an expanding economy like India's. The government has ensured over the years that the aviation infrastructure expands and newer towns are connected through air. However, unless the running costs of the industry are within the scope of commercial viability, the sector cannot prosper.

QUICK TAKE

INDIAN FOOTBALL NEEDS SCIENCE

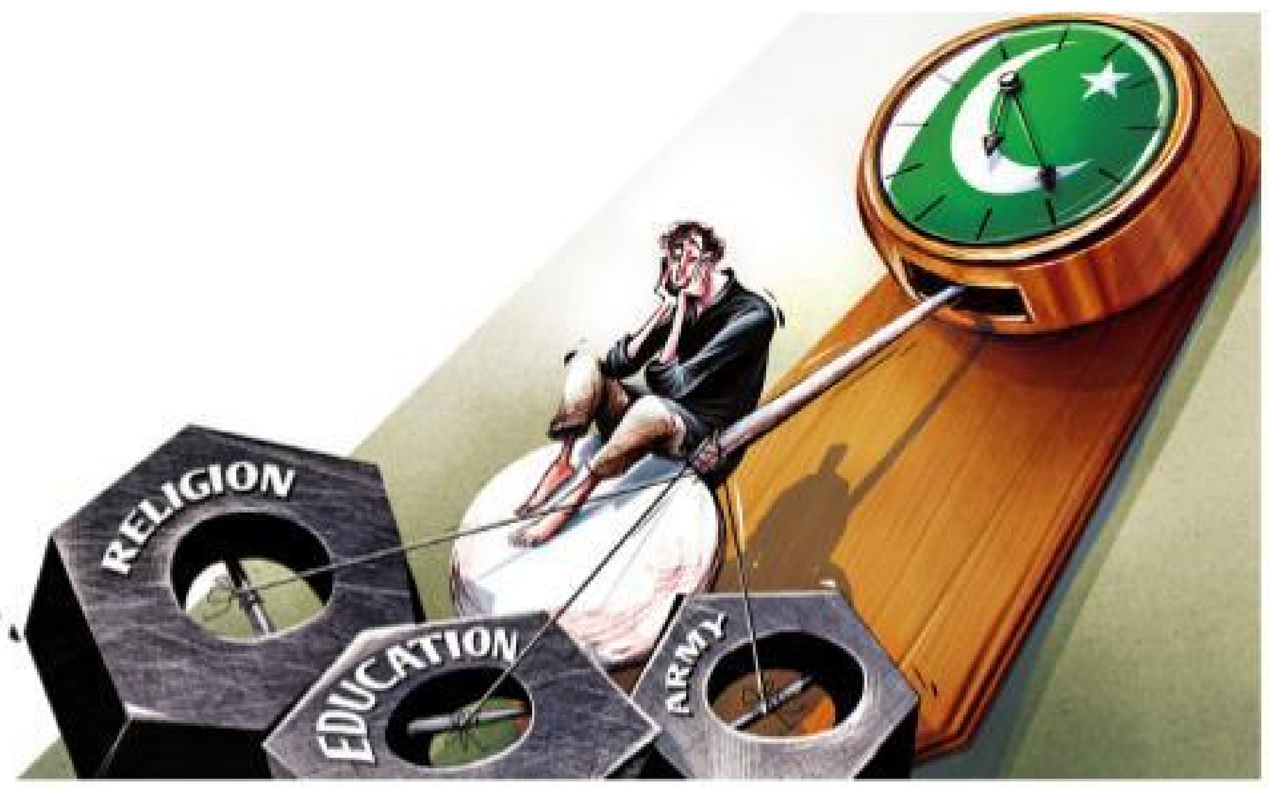
A new study published in Current Biology found that goalkeepers—the most specialised position on the football pitch—can make speedier estimation of the signals their brains receive than outfield players. The study was done in Dublin, the capital of a country ranked 55 in world football. Meanwhile we have learned that India, ranked 102, has recently paid lakhs of rupees to an astrologer to decide the line-up before matches. We hope India's Croatian coach Igor Stimac will not seek help from celestial alignments for the World Cup qualifiers coming up next month. The stars he needs are on the field. Support them with superior science.

The economic crisis is a major worry for Pakistanis. Experts are telling them how disastrous the country's policies have been and how far ahead India is

LAGGING PAKISTAN MUST DO SOME INTROSPECTION

A SURYA PRAKASH

Vice-Chairman, Executive Council, Prime Ministers Museum and Library, New Delhi



SOUMYADIP SINHA

AT the time of its creation in 1947, Pakistan chose to be an Islamic republic—a theocratic state—while India decided to be a secular, democratic republic where liberal values would prevail. Consequently, the people of Pakistan have remained imprisoned in a rigid, inflexible society while Indians have thrived in a plural environment that enables questioning and the quest for knowledge. Since diversity of thought is central to acquisition of knowledge, one can see the impact of these two distinct political systems 76 years after Independence in many fields, especially education.

Providing some valuable insights into this aspect of governance in the two countries is Dr Pervez Hoodbhoy from Pakistan, a nuclear physicist and the guiding light of a platform called *The Black Hole (TBH)* on YouTube where issues pertaining to public policy, education, culture, science and technology are discussed. *TBH* is described as a non-profit, open-to-all and casual educational and intellectual space for science, art and culture in Islamabad. Many youngsters attend these events.

In one of Dr Hoodbhoy's lectures, students in his audience spoke about India's success in landing Chandrayaan 3 near the south pole of the moon and asked him why Pakistan had not developed such a space programme. His response was straight and unambiguous. Dr Hoodbhoy said Pakistan has lagged behind India in various scientific and technological disciplines because of its inability to separate religion and science and to inculcate a scientific temper among the youth. He did not elaborate, but it was obvious that he was referring to some doctrines in the scriptures which are in conflict with modern science.

Interestingly, he said that during his visits to technological institutions and universities in India, he learned that Indian teachers earned less than their counterparts in Pakistan but were far more dedicated to their profession. Further, he found that Indian teachers (from whichever denomination) were as religious as their Pakistani counterparts but left their religious beliefs behind when they went to work.

To drive home his point about the quality of education in India and Pakistan, he asked engineering students in his audience to cull out questions from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) entrance exams and seek answers from their professors. He said not one Pakistani professor will be able to answer the questions. That is why even the best of engineering colleges in Pakistan are no match to the engineering colleges in India because Pakistani teachers are not proficient in their subjects and are also not dedicated to their subjects. They are always thinking about their next increment and the politics in their departments and universities. There may be a bit of exaggeration here, but he was driving home the point that the alumni of engineering colleges in Pakistan are unable to match the alumni of engineering colleges in India. He concluded his analysis by saying, "In our educational institutions, *talim nahi hoti* (there is no education), just procedure … no questions are asked or answered." The quality of education in Indian engineering and management colleges is best exemplified by the fact that their alumni head several top-ranking institutions and corporations in the world.

Needless to say, Dr Hoodbhoy's matter-of-fact lecture on Chandrayaan 3's success and his general comments on religion and education irked a couple of mullahs, who denounced him as an Indian agent.

Another interesting programme on *TBH* was '76 years of Independence: Where do we (Pakistan) stand?'. It had an eminent panel of experts and authors who discussed Pakistan's journey since its creation. The panellists referred to three major problems that have impeded Pakistan's growth. The most worrisome aspect they said was the vice-like grip the Army has on the country and the hard knocks that democracy has taken there since 1947. Another major concern is the dominance of religion in all aspects of life which affects education, gender equality and minorities. The third issue on which there was unanimity was the poor quality of education from the primary level to higher education.

In their view, the country's leadership had bungled at various stages leading to the creation of Bangladesh and current turmoil in Balochistan and other areas. Shakil Chaudhary, an author, said blind patriotism, self-righteousness, obsession with defence of the country, and constant blame and propaganda against the enemy (India) has caused much damage to Pakistan. He added that the media deems it unpatriotic to say anything good about India and there is no self-criticism whatsoever.

Several Pakistani experts have in recent times been trying to bring their people closer to reality and explain to them how Pakistan's domestic and foreign policies have been disastrous and how on the other hand, India under Narendra Modi's leadership has forged ahead in the international arena with tremendous confidence.

Among them is Dr Sajid Tarar, a commentator on international relations. He is telling the Pakistanis to come to terms with the fact that Modi has built strong relations with Muslim countries in the Arab world, dashing Pakistan's hope of using Islam as a trump card against India at all times. In his view, the *Ummah* concept is over, meaning that religion alone cannot be a binding force and it is foolish for Pakistan to pretend to be the standard-bearer for all Muslims across the world. Further, several Arab nations have conferred their highest national awards on Modi.

The dire economic crisis is also a major worry for the people. Earlier this year, the world was shocked to see videos from Pakistan of people mobbing trucks carrying wheat flour and the violence inflicted on individuals wanting to buy a bag of *atta*, which was selling at astronomical prices. Currently, the price of petrol in Pakistan is around Rs 320 per litre, and there is constant comparison with food and petrol prices in India on social media.

Thanks to social media platforms and WhatsApp groups, it is no longer possible for the Pakistani establishment to brainwash their citizens on issues pertaining to India. Pakistani youngsters are getting a reality check from programmes on media entities about the terrible consequences of Partition, religious hatred and bigotry. What impact will it have on the future of Pakistan, its political system and its relations with India? We must wait and watch.

(suryamedia@gmail.com)

FESTIVALS HAVE MESSAGES BEYOND SWEETS, LIGHTS AND COLOURS

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

HAPPY Navaratri, dear readers. It's that time of the year to be social and visit each other on soft October evenings, go to *pujas* and temples if we wish, eat sweets if permitted, and consciously think more good thoughts than ever. The jubilant mood goes on till Deepavali on November 12 and all the way beyond that to Dev Deepavali on November 26, which is Kartik Poornima or Kartikai Deepam. Dev Deepavali is observed in a big way at 'Hindu Central'—Varanasi—to mark Lord Shiva's annihilation of the three demon cities, called Tripura Dahan.

Indeed, this entire festival period is essentially about the power of Good defeating the power of Evil and restoring dharmic balance when the wicked tilt the scale.

The *Devi Mahatmyaham* recited during Navaratri chronicles the killing of the demons Shumba and Nishumba, and then the bull demon Mahishasura by Devi. Vijayadashami or the Victorious Tenth, the end of the festival, celebrates Sri Rama killing Ravana in battle while Deepavali, twenty days later, celebrates his homecoming.

A big idea is of no earthly use unless it applies practically to our daily lives. So, what deeper message do our festivals have for us beyond the festivities?

In my view, Navaratri seems to be a time of personal focus when we review our life goals and 'update our software' on how we want to live. It is a particularly intense time of connecting with the good energy of the universe, symbolised by Devi.

Deepavali is when we can sincerely try to repair broken relationships with family, friends, neighbours and colleagues and resolve unpleasant situations. It could be a small tiff or a big breakdown. But it is our personal homecoming to a baggageless self and a clear conscience that "at least we tried".

Dev Deepavali or Kartik Poornima is a time to promise ourselves that our good intentions will carry us through the next six months until Holi. That is when the calendar offers us another big opportunity to cleanse our minds of bad baggage. It is when the thought of Bhakta Prahlad prompts us to get rid of toxic people from our lives or at least distance ourselves mentally from them as best as we can. Especially by establishing non-reactive mental boundaries against their gaslighting, which means their attempts to put us down.

So, our festivals thoughtfully cater to both ends of the spectrum, from giving us an honourable occasion on which to mend fences to letting us know that it's okay to detach ourselves from hurtful and harmful people and that if we want to build up the mental courage to do so, Holi, coming up on March 25, 2024, is an inspiration to work towards.

What's so endearing about these underlying messages from the festivals is that they don't rush us. They give us time to process our wishes and feelings, confront our fears, be compassionate to ourselves and essentially, love ourselves. This is not to promote selfishness. Rather, these festivals are culturally built-in opportunities to get to a better place in our psyches, and obviously nobody can do that unless they first encourage themselves to heal and feel at peace.

EXPRESS

> Be it Navaratri which is around the corner or Deepavali and Holi after that, festivals give us opportunities to become better versions of ourselves. If each of us works on 'Project Me', society will become better and life will become smoother

This healing changes the way we deal with people and positively affects the atmosphere. So, if more people do this, that is, if they work positively on 'Project Me', society benefits as a whole and life can be smoother and more pleasant all around.

A big physical move towards healing is to become aware of one's breathing. This focuses the mind on the two simple steps of inhaling and exhaling, which help to empty the mind of anxiety. This can be done quietly at different times of the day. Daily exercise, or walking steadily, not necessarily fast, for even twenty minutes, improves breathing and overall physicality. Morning walks are greatly upheld but mornings are chaotic for many people. Welcome to the evening walk. Between 4 p.m and sunset is considered an ideal time. Perhaps working people can slip out of the office around teatime even if it's only to walk around a few corners.

Another big step towards sound sleep and good mental health is to stop looking at the phone or laptop at least an hour before bedtime. This may sound incredibly hard to do nowadays but it's worth a shot, especially if one is armed with a book to read in bed. Soft lighting is extremely important here so I cannot stress the importance enough of switching off the overhead light before bedtime and investing in a bedside lamp with a kindly yellow light, not a cold, harsh white light. Plenty of good, inexpensive options are available online. So, this Festival of Lights, shouldn't we start showing some self-love by lulling ourselves to sleep with some kind, soothing lighting?

Sound, healing sleep is hard to achieve if our minds are tortured by anxious thoughts. Social pressure, family pressure, work pressure, harsh words, difficult circumstances and our own fears of not doing enough, not having enough or not being 'good enough' in a competitive world can all be deeply disturbing.

But there is a cultural message about that as well in our festivals. It is to offer thanksgiving for all the good things that we do have, instead of focusing on what we don't have as peer pressure forces us to do. Indeed, the sister-practice of becoming breath-aware is to practice gratitude. Gratitude is the backbone of our relationships, be it with each other or with God.

If we read our scriptures attentively, we find that epic protagonists are always saying thanks. Kunti after Kurukshetra, when Krishna takes her leave to return to Dwaraka, says, "May misfortune keep visiting us so that you return to our side." After everything that she's been through, it's a terribly grateful thing to say.

If we count our blessings before we sleep, we put a positive, not negative spin on our lives. I hope this festival season brings us many blessings.

(shebaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Political blunders

Ref: *Stop Indira-isation of politics* (Oct 15). Indira Gandhi came to power when she was not prepared to administer a nation that was very poor. It was from her time that dynasty politics was popularised. It is continuing that way within the party with little change. Indira-isation led to political instability and factions emerged due to differences of opinion. Political instability and weak ruling paved the way for Emergency.

Ravi Nair, Palakkad

Improve judiciary

Ref: *Democracy dies when justice suffers* (Oct 14). There is no doubt that the success of any democracy, including ours, depends on the significance and functioning of its judiciary. While appreciating the suggestions made by the experienced former cabinet secretary, K M Chandrasekhar, I wish to point out that the functioning of our higher judiciary will be much smoother if a better system for judicial appointments is created.

B M Baliga, Bengaluru

Executive guilty

From many court pronouncements, it appears that the judiciary must maintain fairness and propriety. But the seemingly rogue executive challenges it in ways unexpected. This weakens the judiciary's power to protect citizens from the illegal adventures of those in power. The challenge is not only for the judiciary but for the people and the nation. This challenge goes well beyond corruption.

Balachandran, email

Blue wins

Ref: *Perfect WC show: India 8-0 Pakistan* (Oct 15). Team India inflicted yet another crushing defeat on Pakistan. The agonising loss for Pakistan reasserts the fact that the psychological bug of not being able to defeat India even once in the World Cup plays heavily on the minds of the men in green.

R Sivakumar, Chennai

Sweet victory

Indian cricket fans just wanted a flower of victory against arch-rival Pakistan at the Narendra Modi Stadium. But to our surprise, Rohit Sharma and his boys gave us a garden full of fragrant victory flowers. Thank you to all members of Team India. We wish them victory in all games ahead.

P P Sahadevan, Nileshwar

Justice delayed

Ref: *Justice hurried is justice buried, says Maha Speaker on disqualification row* (Oct 15). If too much time is spent on hearing arguments of the petitioner and the respondent and if too many adjournments are given, the judgement given will be of no use.

M Lakshmanan, Madurai

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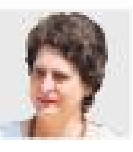
POSTS OF THE DAY

Swapan Dasgupta @swapan55

Durga Puja is definitely the most popular in Bengal but it's appeal in Assam, Odisha, Bihar & Jharkhand shouldn't be minimised.



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra @priyankagandhi

I demand immediate implementation of the Women's Reservation Bill. I demand that women's importance as a political force be respected.

Chandra Shekhar Aazad @BhimArmyChief

Ambedkarism is an ideology of social justice and equality originating in the Indian context that has the power to uplift the oppressed communities across the world.

Navy plans for 3rd aircraft carrier on course

Study continues for its third indigenous carrier, which will be larger and better equipped than the previous IAC-2

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

THE Indian Navy's operational necessity matched with the budgetary planning will soon fructify into approvals for the second Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-2). However, the Navy's work on the third and larger aircraft carrier will continue.

"The files for another indigenous aircraft carrier are in advanced stages and will get the government approvals soon," said a source. Besides, the plans towards the third and larger aircraft carrier have been in motion, the source said.

As reported by this newspaper in February, in order to maintain its operational capabilities, the Indian Navy will continue the study for its third indigenous aircraft carrier which will be larger than the IAC-2. The Navy's confirmations for the IAC-2 on the lines of the IAC-1 commissioned as INS Vikrant were given with the document works being completed in December 2022.

It was on the sidelines of Aero India 2023 that Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar said, "Initially we will go for the repeat order with improved capabilities. And in the meantime, we will go for a study of larger carriers. By the time a third aircraft is commissioned, the life-span of INS Vikramaditya may end."

Some changes were made to the initial plans of IAC 2 which was supposed to be bigger than IAC 1 in size. "The size of INS Vikrant is 44,000 tonnes and we wanted the IAC2 to be around 65,000 tonnes."

The move for a repeat order of IAC-1 is based on multiple factors, including construction time, the cost and the trajectory of indigenization of aviation assets.

As per the Navy, a new aircraft carrier equipped with newer technologies will have to take into account the fresh versions of landing through catapult system. The ship-building facility will have to be upgraded.

Talking to this newspaper, the officials had said that given the Chinese belligerence in the Indian Ocean, the country will have to extend its air power into far-off areas such as the Malacca Strait on one side, and the Gulf of Aden on the other.

"The concentration of force is a principle of war. If you have two operationally ready carriers, you can be active in two areas. If needed, you can move them, bringing a different environment to the battle," said a source.

An aircraft carrier is a floating airfield and adds to the surge capability as the fighter jets operating from land will always have their limitations.

"Operationally, new technologies and drones are coming in which can be launched from the carrier. The Indian Navy requires three carriers because if one of them goes for maintenance, the force still has two carriers for months. An aircraft carrier has lengthy maintenance schedules," said the source.

This has been the case with the refit of India's lone aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya which started in the beginning of 2021 and was completed around August this year.

With one aircraft carrier still under maintenance and one yet to be inducted, the Indian Navy will be operating a carrier for some more time. The Navy has been maintaining the three carriers-based force structure so that it can operate two of them in maritime zones on each side of the Indian coastline — eastern and western coasts. INS Vikramaditya was originally a Russian carrier Admiral Gorshkov which was commissioned in 2013 after total refurbishing. The 44,500-tonne INS Vikramaditya has an airfield with an overall length of about 284 meters. As reported by TNIE in December, the Navy completed all the documentation work on the repeat orders and it is expected that the approvals from the government will come soon. The new aircraft carrier is also expected to be of 45,000 displacements with STOBAR (short take-off but arrested recovery' or short take-off, barrier-arrested recovery) technology.

WHY INDIA NEEDS 3 AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

- An aircraft carrier is a floating airfield. Fighter jets operating from land have their limitations
- By the time 3rd aircraft is commissioned, the life-span of INS Vikramaditya may end, leaving the Navy with 2 carriers
- The Indian Navy requires three aircraft carriers because of the maintenance factor
- The move for a repeat order of IAC-1 is based on construction time, cost and indigenization of aviation assets

POWER GAMES

SHAHID FARIDI

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Telangana Elections

KCR MAY NOT HAND BATON TO SON AFTER POLLS

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi headed by Telangana chief minister K Chandrashekhar Rao is locked in a fierce battle with the Congress in the state assembly elections scheduled for November 30. The BJP campaign had picked up about a month back, but the party is now relegated to a distant third position due to differences within the state unit which led to the change of party president in July this year. BRS sources dismissed reports that the party's victory would see KCR making way for his son, K T Rama Rao, as the next chief minister. They said that KCR has elaborate expansion plans to turn BRS into a national party. Telangana shares close to a thousand kilometer border with Maharashtra. Telangana government schemes such as Ryuthu Bandhu and Dalit Bandhu are viewed with much interest by the Maharashtrians living on the Telangana border. Sources said KCR wants BRS to contest close to 10 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra in the 2024 election. He has made many trips to Maharashtra and has set up party units in hundreds of villages in about a dozen districts bordering Telangana. KCR has used his position as the chief minister and the attendant protocol in his expansion drive in the bordering states. Sources close to him said the chief minister plans to continue in the post until his party gains ground in a few other states and gets a national status.

Battle of Northeast

ZORAMTHANGA IS OUT OF TUNE IN HIS SWAN SONG

The northeastern state of Mizoram, which is scheduled to go in for election on November 7, is unlikely to see any pre-poll alliance. There are four parties in the fray – Mizo National Front (MNF) led by chief minister Zoramthanga, Congress, BJP, and the newly-formed Zoram People's Movement (ZPM). The 79-year-old Zoramthanga, who is the senior-most politician in the state, is fighting his last election. And he has his back against the wall.

The Congress, which was soundly defeated by the MNF in the last election, is gaining support. So is the ZPM, which is headed by an ex-Indian Police Service officer Lalduhawma, who had won his first election as a Member of Parliament in 1984 on a Congress ticket. In the last assembly election, Lalduhawma had contested from two seats and won from both. The BJP had managed to win only one assembly seat in the last election from the predominantly Buddhist Chakma area. The party is trying to improve its performance by bringing prominent state politicians into its fold. There are reports that assembly Speaker Lalrinliana Sailo, who was denied ticket by the MNF, may contest as a BJP candidate. The BJP list may include some other big names. The main contest, however, is between the ruling MNF and the Congress. State watchers are predicting a hung house and a coalition government in the state.

India adopts global practices to fight bird flu without vaccines

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

IN a bid to eradicate the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) or 'bird flu' without the use of vaccinations, India has adopted a set of globally recognised protocols to fight the virus. The country has been successful in the endeavour, with 26 poultry farms made free of HPAI in this manner. Another 10 poultry farms are set to be declared bird flu free as well.

The international regulatory agency, World Organisation for Animal Health, has recently approved India's efforts.

"This achievement is a testament to India's commitment to maintaining high standards related to animal health and biosecurity," said Parshottam Rupala, Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries. "India, as the third largest producer of eggs (129.60 billion) and the fifth largest producer of poultry meat (4.47 million tonnes) globally, is poised to capitalise on this achievement," he said.

Earlier, the time-consuming nature of the protocol had made way for the illegal vaccination market.

The poultry industry had long been demanding preventive measures against avian influenza to protect their millions of birds. The size of the poultry industry stands at 851 million birds in India and they are at a risk of bird flu outbreak.

Avian influenza causes devastating consequences for the poultry industry, farmers' livelihoods, international trade and the health of wild birds.India's policy to control bird flu is 'detect and cull' approach including destruction of animals.

Avian flu outbreak

Bird flu was first detected in India in February 2006, at Navapur town of Maharashtra. Since then, the country has experienced annual outbreaks of HPAI in different regions, leading to substantial economic losses. The disease has been reported in 24 states and Union Territories, resulting in the culling of over 9 million birds to control its spread. The last reported outbreak was also in Navapur in 2021.

BJP MP charges Moitra with cash for query, writes to Birla

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

Waiting for ED & others to file FIR in Adani coal scam before coming to my doorstep... Also welcome CBI's enquiry into my alleged money laundering right after they finish investigating Adani's offshore money trail, over invoicing, benami accounts

Mahua Moitra, TMC MP

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey kickstarted a political storm on Sunday after he wrote a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, seeking action against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra for allegedly taking bribe for raising questions in the House.

Dubey, who is often at loggerheads with Moitra in the Parliament, has demanded her immediate suspension from the House. "I am in receipt of a letter from Advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai, wherein he has shared irrefutable evidence of cash and gifts exchanged between Lok Sabha MP Mahua Moitra and business tycoon Darshan Hirananadani to ask question(s) in Parliament," Dubey alleged in his letter.

"Moitra asked approximately 50 questions in Parliament, out of the total 61 posted by her that shockingly seek information, with the intent of protecting the business interests of Darshan Hirananadani and his company," Dubey's letter alleged, adding that Moitra's questions were often focused on the Adani group.

Dubey claimed that he has enclosed all documents and relevant papers forwarded by Dehadrai with his letter. "After having meticulously gone through all the papers and documents, there is not an iota of doubt about a criminal conspiracy hatched by Mahua Moitra to protect the business interest of a businessman by asking questions in the Parliament, which is reminiscent of the 'cash-for-query' episode of 12 December, 2005," Dubey said.

He has also alleged that all these acts by Moitra are a clear case of Breach of Privilege, Contempt of the House, and a criminal offence under IPC Section 120A.

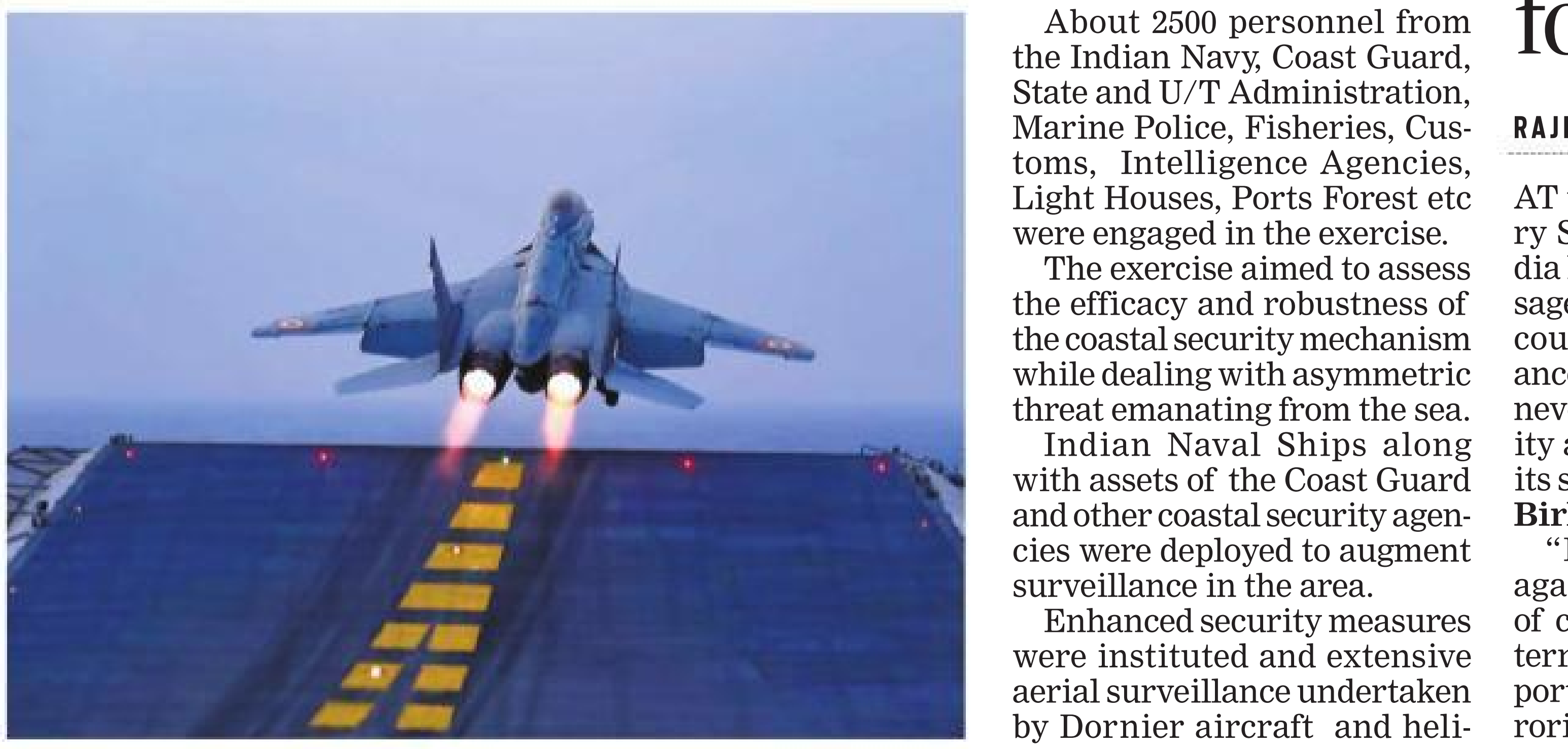
Undeterred by the BJP MP's allegations of cash-for-questions, Moitra took to social media site X. "If Adani group is relying on dodgy dossier created by dubious Sanghis and circulated by fake degree wallahs to either shut me up or bring me down, I would advise them not to waste their time. Use your lawyers wisely," she wrote on the website.

"Multiple breach of privileges pending against fake degreewala and other BJP luminaries. Welcome any motions against me right after Speaker finishes dealing with those. Also waiting for enforcement directorate and others to file FIR in Adani coal scam before coming to my doorstep," she wrote on X.

In a third post, she said, "Also welcome CBI's enquiry into my alleged money laundering right after they finish investigating Adani's offshore money trail, over invoicing, benami accounts. Adani may use BJP agencies to browbeat competition & buy airports but just try doing it with me."

Drill for coastal security along eastern belt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi



Anti-submarine, anti-aircraft and surface drills with live firings by multiple platforms were undertaken from INS Vikramaditya | EXPRESS

THE operational readiness of the sword arm of India's maritime force was reviewed on Sunday. It followed a comprehensive coastal security exercise on the eastern sea-board.

Indian Navy on Sunday said, "Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Flag Officer Commanding in Chief (FOCinC) Western Naval Command (WNC) embarked Western Fleet for a review of operational readiness inspection of the Western Fleet". Rear Admiral Vineet McCarty is the Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet (FOCWF).

"The CinC witnessed anti-submarine, anti-aircraft, and surface drills, and live firings by multiple platforms in a realistic multi-threat scenario, including air operations from INS Vikramaditya."

The CinC also embarked the newly inducted MH60R helicopter and expressed satisfaction with efforts made for early fleet integration.

The biggest ships of the Indian Navy form part of its two Fleets. A Fleet is a group of ships that operate under one authority. The Indian Navy's Western Fleet is based at Mumbai and the Eastern Fleet is based at Visakhapatnam.

Meanwhile, at a larger scale, on the Eastern seaboard a two-day comprehensive Coastal Security Exercise Sagar Kavach 02/23 involving all maritime security agencies was conducted by the Indian Navy in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and the UT of Puducherry last week from 11-12 October.

The exercise was executed under the aegis of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command, FOCINC (East) who also exercises the authority of Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Defence (East).

About 2500 personnel from the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, State and U/T Administration, Marine Police, Fisheries, Customs, Intelligence Agencies, Light Houses, Ports Forest etc were engaged in the exercise.

The exercise aimed to assess the efficacy and robustness of the coastal security mechanism while dealing with asymmetric threat emanating from the sea.

Indian Naval Ships along with assets of the Coast Guard and other coastal security agencies were deployed to augment surveillance in the area.

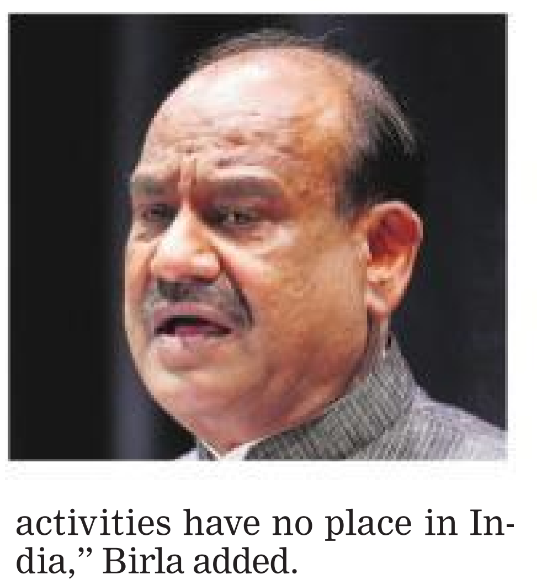
Enhanced security measures were instituted and extensive aerial surveillance undertaken by Dornier aircraft and helicopters operating from Visakhapatnam, Chennai and Ramnathapuram.

The exercise was closely monitored at Joint Operations Centre (East) at Visakhapatnam which is the nodal hub for all coastal security operations and exercises in the area of operations.

The exercise witnessed close coordination and synergy among all coastal security stakeholders.

India doesn't support terrorism in any form, Speaker tells G20 counterparts

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi



AT the ninth G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20), India has categorically left a message to its counterparts that the country maintains zero tolerance against terrorism and will never allow any terrorist activity against another country on its soil, Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla** said on Sunday.

"India has a clear stand against terrorism. Not an iota of compromise is done against terrorism and India never supported, nor will it support, terrorism in any form," he said at a press conference, while replying to a media query. He was responding to a question on whether any Speaker from the G20 countries had raised the issue of presence of people in India who were pursuing separatist activities abroad.

"The position of the government is very clear in this regard. The Prime Minister has also said it in his statement. The government has made it clear that terrorism and terror activities have no place in India," Birla added.

Birla went on to say that India never tolerated any form of terrorism, whether it is in the form of religion or caste. "Terrorism is terrorism, and no form of terror will find any support in India. This is the clear government policy," Birla clarified.

Replying to another query, he said that 13 bilateral meetings were held with the speakers and other presiding officers from G20 nations and others invited, during the P20 Summit.

The Speaker also said that as many as 436 delegates, including presiding officers of 27 nations and 49 Members of Parliament participated in the two-day summit that concluded on October 14.

He claimed that among all the P20 summits, the ninth summit drew the maximum attendance so far and a consensus on the joint statement was the key highlight.

India, hosting the P20 Summit, has offered to set up an expert group on legislative drafting, as this is an area in which the Indian Parliament has considerable expertise and has organised training sessions for parliaments of several countries.

India has a clear stand against terrorism. Not an iota of compromise is done against terrorism and India never supported, nor will it support, terrorism in any form

Om Birla, Lok Sabha Speaker

SAHITYA AWARDEE DIES

Sahitya Akademi award winner and veteran journalist from Jammu and Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Khayal died on Sunday. He was 85. Khayal was awarded for his book 'Gaashik Minaar' and has authored over 30 books

2 PEDDLERS HELD WITH 239 KG POPPY STRAW IN J-K

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	36	25	Mumbai	35	27
Bhopal	35	20	Panaji	32	26
Jaipur	35	22	Patna	35	25
Amritsar	30	18	Lucknow	38	23
Chennai	31	27	Port Blair	30	25
Kolkata	34	25	Imphal	28	16
Srinagar	21	08	Chandigarh	36	19

A different battle for saffron party as it refuses to project CM's face

Protests rage as BJP fields 7 MPs for Rajasthan polls

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

> **The BJP may field more MPs or Union ministers ... The party's Parliamentary Board is the supreme body to decide the ticket distribution and whatever the board has decided will soon be revealed**
>
> CP Joshi, state BJP chief

THE BJP's decision to nominate seven MPs in its initial list of candidates for the Rajasthan assembly elections appears to be causing problems for the party. Most MPs fielded in various constituencies are facing protests.

In Jaipur on Saturday, a march was organised in the Jhotwara constituency in support of senior leader and former minister Rajpal Singh, who was dropped from the list, and former Union Minister and MP from Jaipur Rural **Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore**, who was nominated in his place. More than 300 supporters of Rajpal Singh joined the procession and decided to intensify their protests.

Even before this procession, opposition had emerged to the nomination of Rajyavardhan. On the night of October 9, immediately after the BJP released its first candidate list, Rajpal Singh visited the former chief minister Vasundhara Raje's residence and chanted slogan 'Rajyavardhan Singh go back.' The next day, Rajpal's supporters also protested at the BJP headquarters in Jaipur.

Similarly, following the denial of the ticket from Vidyadharnagar, the son of ex-CM Bhairo Singh Shekhawat Narpat Singh Rajvi expressed his dissatisfaction openly. Diya Kumari, an MP from the former royal family of Jaipur, has been nominated in his place.

Similarly, opposition is growing against the nomination of MP Devji Patel in Sanchore. Previously, former MLA Jeevaram Chaudhary and former candidate Danaram Chaudhary, who were competing for this seat, had expressed their dissent. Reportedly, Jeevaram and Danaram are now working together to challenge Devji Patel in this election.

State party chief CP Joshi has not ruled out the possibility of fielding more MPs. "The party's Parliamentary Board is of course the supreme body to decide the ticket distribution and whatever the board has decided will soon be revealed."

The BJP leadership in the past has not faced such a significant internal opposition. The reason is that the party, in a break from tradition, has not announced a contender for the post of chief minister, which was historically held by Vasundhara Raje Scindia.

Oppn from within BJP

The BJP leadership in the past has not faced such a significant internal opposition. The reason is that the party, in a break from tradition, has not announced a contender for the post of chief minister

Rebels threaten Cong candidates' prospects in Madhya Pradesh

Unrest surfaces in Cong after first list for MP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhopal

> **OBCs form 70% of Tikamgarh. Still on all three unreserved seats, Congress fielded candidates from a particular upper caste. This exposes the hollowness in their newfound love for backward castes**
>
> Ajay Singh Yadav, Congress leader

UNREST has hit opposition Congress in many parts of poll-bound Madhya Pradesh after the party released its first list of 144 candidates on Sunday.

Protests and resignations by workers and leaders have been reported from Sagar, Datia, Ujjain, Satna, Gwalior, Chhatarpur and Panna districts. In Satna district, annoyed over the denial of nomination and instead fielding 2018 rebel candidate **Rashmi Singh Patel**, former MLA Yadvendra Singh quit the Congress and joined the BSP. He is likely to contest from Nagod.

Also, peeved over no OBC leader being fielded from any of the three unreserved seats of Tikamgarh district (Tikamgarh, Prithvipur and Khargapur), state Congress's media department's vice-chairman Ajay Singh Yadav resigned from all party posts.

"OBCs form 70% of Tikamgarh. Still on all three unreserved seats, Congress fielded candidates from a particular upper caste. This exposes the hollowness in the Congress' newfound love for backward castes," Ajay Singh Yadav said.

In the neighbouring Sagar district, the second-time district panchayat member Sharda Khatik (who was in the race for the party ticket from Naryaoli-SC seat) also quit the party against the nomination of ex-minister and former MLA Surendra Chowdhary, despite him losing the Naryaoli seat thrice in the past.

Congress workers protested outside the district party office in Datia district against the nomination of former BJP leader Avdhesh Nayak after denying a chance to former MLA Rajendra Bharti against state Home Minister and sitting MLA Narottam Mishra. The agitated party workers set ablaze the effigy of the newly declared Congress candidate.

In Indore, party workers set ablaze the effigy of Indore-4 candidate Raja Mandhwani, dubbing him a weak candidate as well as alleging that he would offer no challenge to the third-time sitting BJP MLA and ex-Indore mayor Malini Gaur.

Meanwhile, unconfirmed reports said three-time former Dhar MP Gajendra Singh Rajukhedi too is dejected over the manner in which tickets have been distributed in Dhar district.

Crisis in Mandsaur

In Mandsaur district, a major section of Congress is annoyed over fielding Rakesh Patidar as candidate from Suvasara seat. Local Congress leader Balu Singh Tarnod has announced to contest against him

MUMBAI DIARY

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI

Our correspondent in Maharashtra

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'People like Sharad Pawar, not nephew Ajit'

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), sources say, had conducted several surveys to gauge public opinion after its former senior leader Ajit Pawar revolted and joined the BJP and Shiv Sena alliance led by Eknath Shinde with the majority of NCP MLAs. The surveys have claimed that most of the NCP's core voters support Sharad Pawar than Ajit Pawar and relate the NCP with the former. Seventy per cent respondents believe that Sharad Pawar-led NCP is 'pro-Maratha' compared to the ruling alliance. The Assembly polls are slated for next year and there is more at stake for NCP and Shiv Sena as both faced infighting.

Ajit Pawar's wings clipped by Shinde?

Though Ajit Pawar, leader of the faction supporting Maha-Yuti (ruling alliance) has got the Deputy CM's post along with some plump portfolios, his wings seem to be clipped. CM Eknath Shinde has instructed officials that all files from Ajit's office should not come directly but routed through senior BJP leader and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Recently, Ajit was instructed by Shinde's office to call meetings only for those related to his portfolios. Shinde, who was fearing losing his say in the government when Ajit joined the ruling alliance, is working towards cementing this position by taking the help of Fadnavis.

Race to rule BMC without holding of elections

Maha Yuti (ruling alliance) seems to be trying to control Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Asia's richest civic body, whose elections are still due. BJP MLA Mangal Prabhat Lodha, who is guardian minister of Mumbai suburb, has opened his office at BMC's heritage building, the first time ever by an individual since the formation of the civic body. He was followed by Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena MLA and guardian minister of Mumbai city Deepak Kesarkar. Now, deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar-led NCP is also planning to have its office for its minister in the same building.

ROAD ACCIDENT

12 dead as bus rams into truck on Maha e-way

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

TWELVE people, including a five-year-old girl, died and 23 people were left seriously injured after the driver of a mini bus allegedly lost control and rammed a container truck on the Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Mahamarg in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar district on Sunday.

According to police, the accident took place on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday when 35 members of a family from Nashik were returning home after paying a visit to the Sailani Baba Dargah in Buldhana.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced ₹5 lakh financial help to close family members of the victims while the state government will take the responsibility of medical treatment of injured passengers.

Aurangabad superintendent of police Maneesh Kalwaniya said, "The container stopped on the highway and it was stationed on the fourth lane of the highway. However, its wheels were still on the third lane and it appears that the driver of the mini bus could not gauge that, due to which he went and rammed the container."

Ajit wanted police land for bizman, says former top cop

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

FORMER Maharashtra top cop Meeran Chadha Borwankar in her book 'Madam Commissioner – The Extraordinary Life of India Police chief' has alleged that, when she was police commissioner of Pune, Ajit Pawar had pressurised her to release the police land around Yerwada Prison to the private builder at a price lower than market rate.

Borwankar has not named Ajit Pawar in the book. The person is referred as 'Dada' and 'guardian minister' of Pune. But as per the record, when Borwankar took the charge of Pune police commissioner in July 2010, Ajit Pawar was the guardian minister of Pune in the Congress-NCP government. At present, Ajit Pawar is deputy chief minister and guardian minister of Pune in the BJP-led government in Maharashtra.

"I met the guardian minister at the divisional commissioner office where he was having the map of Yerwada prison in his hand and asked me that this particular government land auction has been done so the hand over process should be completed. However, informed the guardian minister that this land is at the centre of the Pune so it will not be appropriate to give such an important land parcel to a private person. Besides, this land can be used for police offices and quarters and in future, the government will not get such land as well," she wrote in her book.

Ajit Pawar not named in book

The person is referred in the book as 'Dada' and 'guardian minister' of Pune. As per the record, when Borwankar took the charge as Pune police commissioner in July 2010, Ajit Pawar was the guardian minister of Pune in the Congress-NCP government

Borwankar further wrote that despite her reservations about giving the government land to private persons the guardian minister insisted. "I told him that I just took charge of Pune CP so it will not be appropriate from her side to take such a decision. This decision will be pursued differently therefore she is not in favour of it. Then, the guardian minister threw the copy of the map on the table. I saluted him and left the office. He also used objectionable words against late home minister RR Patil that I cannot even write here," stated in the book.

Speaking over the development, Deputy CM Ajit Pawar said, "I have never participated in any government land auction. I wish to clarify that the guardian minister has no right of auctioning any government land. Therefore, I have nothing to do with these auctions or proceedings. These rights are with the revenue department and the cabinet takes the final decision. Besides, the government land is always sold at the government rate."

"Actually, I always oppose such kind of land auctions. I am someone who takes the government side. If anyone has doubts, it can be verified by government officers," he said.

Ahead of LS polls, BJP extends Bengal outreach via 1,000 puja pandals

PRONAB MONDAL @ Kolkata

Aiming to use Bengal's biggest religious festival as an outreach drive in the run up to the Lok Sabha elections in 2024, the BJP has decided to organise at least 25 Durga Pujas in districts and set a target for its leaders to be involved in over 1,000 existing Pujas across the state this year.

Eyeing to breach TMC's hegemony in organising Pujas, the saffron camp has decided to organise the event in different banners and earmarked 1,000-odd existing pujas where party leaders play active role, said a BJP leader.

"Our leaders will play active roles to organise inaugural programmes and cultural events during the festival. They will also use the Puja platform to aware people of the success stories of the Narendra Modi government," said a BJP leader.

The decision of the BJP's Bengal chapter to involve its leaders in the Durga Puja was taken after Union Home minister Amit Shah agreed to visit the state capital on Monday and inaugurate a Puja at Santosh Mitra Square in central Kolkata. The Prime Minister had also inaugurated a Durga Puja in Kolkata in October, 2020, virtually, which was organised by the party for the first time.

> **Our leaders will play active roles to organise inaugural programmes and cultural events during the festival. They will also use the Puja platform to aware people of the success stories of the Narendra Modi government**
>
> A BJP leader

BJP's national president J.P. Nadda is scheduled to visit Kolkata on October 20 on the occasion of the festival.

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In a bid to breach Trinamool's hegemony in organising Pujas, the saffron camp has decided to organise the event in different banners and earmarked 1,000-odd existing pujas where party leaders play active role, said a BJP leader.

Left to die by comrades, Maoist gets CRPF shoulders

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

SECURITY forces in Jharkhand trekked nearly five kilometers with a wounded Maoist on their shoulders dodging the IEDs so that his life could be saved. The Maoist was lying unattended on the ground after being abandoned by his squad in Kolhan jungles of West Singhbhum following an encounter with the security personnel on Saturday.

Notably, the Maoists have planted thousands of IEDs to check security forces entering into the jungles, due to which regular incidents of blasts are taking place during operations. Since November 2022, four security personnel have been killed while 28 others were critically injured, besides claiming lives of 11 civilians in IED blasts triggered by Maoists in Kolhan jungles.

According to police, following an encounter with Maoists, the security personnel found an injured Maoist groaning in pain who was abandoned by his squad in the forests.

"A gun battle of security forces with Maoists took place on Friday in Kolhan jungles of West Singhbhum, following which, massive search operation was launched in the area to trace rebels.

An army helicopter awaits as the security personnel carry the Maoist | EXPRESS

Minor maoist may have been left dying

Prima facie, it appears that the Maoist, a minor, was critically injured in the IED blast and his squad members left him dying, he said. During search operation, one Maoist, was found lying on the ground groaning with pain who was first carried by the jawans on their shoulders to reach the helipad and taken to Hathiburu Camp of CRPF and given first aid and finally airlifted to Ranchi

During search operation, one Maoist, a minor, was found lying on the ground groaning with pain. He was first carried by the jawans on their shoulders to reach the helipad after trekking nearly km and taken to Hathiburu Camp of CRPF and given first aid and finally airlifted to Ranchi," said West Singhbhum SP Ashutosh Shekher.

Prima facie, it appears that he was critically injured in the IED blast and his squad members left him dying, he said.

The SP informed that the Maoists have planted thousands of IEDs across the entire region – which was dodged by the security personnel during the long trek carrying the injured Maoist to the CRPF camp. The operation is still on in Kolhan jungles to trace the Maoists, he said.

According to SP, despite the fact that Maoists have planted IEDs in the entire area, forces are advancing slowly into the jungles with full determination and have established several temporary security camps in their core areas.

The state police have launched a joint operation in Kolhan jungles in November 2022 after a tip-off that some of the senior Maoist leaders, including Misir Besra and Patiram Majhi alias Anal Da, are hiding in that forest stretch, which is said to be strategically important.

Militancy finally on the wane in J&K? Only 10 join ranks this year, say police

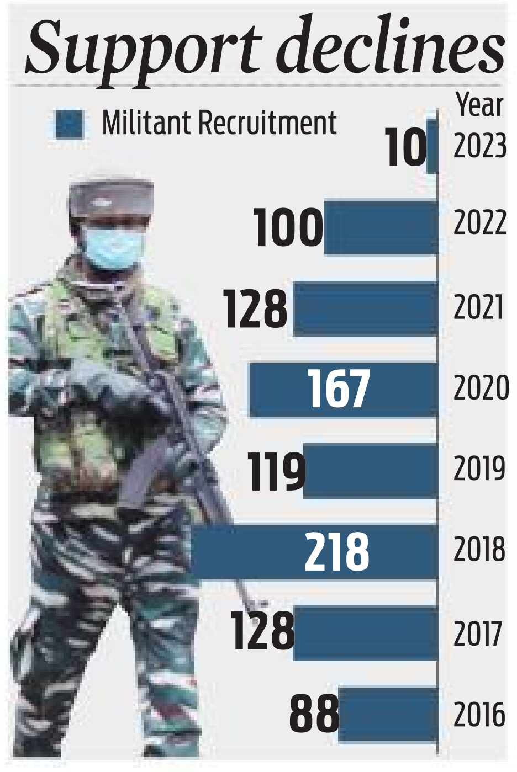
FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

WITH local militant recruitment in Kashmir falling to only 10 this year after touching the peak of 218 in 2018, security top brass have opined that militancy will wane due to less recruitment and cross-border elements will find it difficult to sustain terror activities in the union territory.

J&K police chief Dilbagh Singh has disclosed that only 10 local youth joined militancy in Kashmir this year.

Of the 10 new recruits, six were killed in encounters with security forces. In 2022, about 100 local youth had joined militant ranks and 65 new recruits were killed in the encounters.

According to police data, 128 youth had joined militancy in 2021, 167 in 2020, 119 in 2019, 218 in 2018, 128 in 2017 and 88 in 2016. The militant recruitment in the Valley had picked up after the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander and poster boy of new age militant Burhan Wani in an encounter with security forces in July 2016.



The militant recruitment had touched the peak of 218 in 2018 and since then security agencies had been working to dissuade local youth from joining militancy.

"The considerable drop in militant recruitment is good news. The militancy will wane due to less local recruitment. And in such a scenario, Pakistan will find it difficult to sustain militancy in the region," former J&K Police chief S P Vaid told this newspaper.

He said there are many reasons for drop in local recruitment including the prevailing turmoil in Pakistan.

"Pakistan's internal situation is very bad and this has disillusioned people, especially youth and they are now moving away from militancy and violence. The youth of Kashmir are very intelligent and they know what is the situation in Pakistan and what can they gain from it," he said.

The former J&K police chief said the security grid is very strong and security forces have gone all out against the militants within J&K. "Besides, the anti-infiltration grid at the LoC and International Border has been strengthened and infiltration bids are being foiled by troops , thus preventing infiltration of militants into J&K".

The authorities, he said, have also successfully countered the radicalization of youth being done by Pakistan and its sponsored agencies.

34
children brought back to Russia from refugee camps in Syria

GLOBAL WEATHER

Beijing	29	16	SNY	Los Angeles	26	17	LC
Colombo	29	24	LC	Melbourne	25	12	HR
Dhaka	32	27	SNY	Moscow	21	8	HR
Dubai	39	31	SNY	New York	26	16	LC
Houston	31	23	SNY	Singapore	32	27	SNY
Istanbul	29	17	SNY	Toronto	19	11	LC
London	24	13	LC	Washington	27	14	SNY

LR: Light Rain **HR:** Heavy Rain
TDS: Thundershower **LC:** Light Cloud **SNY:** Sunny

Poland votes in crucial election since communism

WARSAW

POLAND was choosing on Sunday between its ruling party and the coalition of opposition groups that accuse the conservative nationalists of eroding the country's 34-year-old democratic system.

The turnout was over 57% at 1500 GMT, with four hours of voting left to go, National Electoral Commission said.

Many Poles feel it is the most important election since 1989, when a new democracy was born after decades of communism. At stake are the health of the nation's constitutional order, its legal stance on LGBTQ+ rights and abortion, and the foreign alliances of a country that has been a crucial ally to Ukraine.

Supporters of the ruling Law and Justice party say they appreciate its defence of Catholic traditions and its spending on retirees and families with children in the nation of 38 million.

Law and Justice has also eroded checks and balances to gain more control over state institutions, including the courts, public media and the electoral process itself.

Support for the party has shrunk since the last election in 2019 amid high inflation, allegations of cronyism and bickering with European allies. Law and Justice won nearly 44% of the vote in 2019 but has been polling in recent weeks at over 30%. While still the single most popular party, Law and Justice was still at risk of losing its majority in parliament on Sunday.

The opposition parties Civic Coalition, Third Way and New Left have campaigned on promises to repair the rule of law and ties with the EU and other allies if they manage to gain power. The final outcome of the vote could be ultimately decided by the margins gained or lost by the smaller parties.

Law and Justice could need the support of the far-right Confederation party to govern, but both parties said during their campaigns that that is not an option.

Civic Coalition leader Donald Tusk, the former prime minister, was cheered by a large crowd when he voted in Warsaw, with people snapping photos and wishing him good luck. *AP*

Things to know about Poles' polls

THE PARTIES

01 **LAW AND JUSTICE:** The right-wing party that has governed Poland since 2015 is led by Deputy PM Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the country's most powerful politician

02 **CIVIC COALITION:** A centrist coalition dominated by the Civic Platform party led by Donald Tusk, 66, a former Polish PM and former EU president. The coalition also includes three smaller parties including the Greens

03 **THIRD WAY:** A coalition of the centrist Poland 2050 party and the agrarian Polish People's Party, PSL

04 **CONFEDERATION LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE:** A hard-right, anti-EU coalition that includes radical nationalists as well as free-market libertarians

05 **NEW LEFT:** The Social Democratic party that wants a clear separation of state and church as well as a tax on the Catholic Church's assets in the country

THE VOTE

29 million Poles aged 18 and above are eligible to vote

They will choose 460 members of the lower house, and 100 for the Senate for four-year terms

Individual parties need to get at least 5% of votes to win seats in parliament, coalitions need at least 8% of votes

THE REFERENDUM

A referendum is being held. Voters are being asked their views on accepting migrants, keep a new wall on the border with Belarus, raise retirement age & sell off state assets

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Tusk says the election is the most important one since Poland shed communism in 1989. He says it's about Poland's future in the EU and that Law and Justice remaining in power could result in Poland leaving the union, which it joined in 2004

The current government says it has no plans to bring Poland out of the EU. It has alleged that if Tusk's coalition takes power, the country will be flooded with migrants, which opposition rejects as scaremongering

REFERENDUM LOSS

Oz aims to lift Indigenous living standards

CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA will look for new ways to lift Indigenous living standards after voters soundly rejected a proposal to create a new advocacy committee, the deputy PM said on Sunday.

Every state and mainland territory apart from Australian Capital Territory voted against a proposal to enshrine in the constitution an Indigenous Voice to Parliament to advocate on behalf of the country's most disadvantaged ethnic minority.

Deputy PM Richard Marles said his government remained committed to improving Indigenous welfare to close the eight-year gap in average life expectancies between Indigenous Australians and the wider community.

"In terms of exactly what the precise steps forward are from here is a matter that we need to take some time to work through and I think people can understand that," Marles told Australian Broadcasting Corp. "Coming out of this referendum there is a greater call for action on closing the gap," Marles added.

Indigenous Voice campaigners were flying Aboriginal flags at half-staff across Australia on Sunday as a mark of their disappointment.

Proponents had hoped that the Voice's advice would lead to better government service delivery and improved outcomes for Indigenous people.

Latest counting on Sunday found more than 60% of voters had opposed the Voice. There was majority support for the Voice in Outback polling booths in the Northern Territory. *AP*

Injured people receiving treatment after a powerful earthquake in Herat province in western Afghanistan on Sunday | AP

6.3 magnitude quake shakes same region of Afghanistan a week later

HERAT

A powerful 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck western Afghanistan on Sunday, just over a week after strong quakes and aftershocks killed thousands of people and flattened entire villages in the same province.

The latest quake's epicentre was 33 kilometres northwest of Herat city and was followed by aftershocks of magnitudes 5.4, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, the United States Geological Survey said.

Save the Children said four persons have died and that Herat Regional Hospital has received 153 injured. Everything in the Baloch area of Rabat Sangi district has collapsed. Several villages have been destroyed. Authorities have given lower casualty numbers.

Sayed Kazim Rafiqi, 42, a Herat city resident, said he had never seen such devastation before with the majority of houses damaged and "people terrified." Rafiqi and others headed to the hospital to donate much-needed blood.

"We have to help in any way possible," he said.

Residents in the provincial capital Herat city had just begun returning to their homes, after days of sleeping outside fearing aftershocks, when the latest earthquake hit around 8.00 am on Sunday.

Officials said more than 528 prisoners had been released from Herat province and neighbouring Badghis province because jails "were in danger of collapsing" from quake damage. The Prisons Administration Authority said those freed included inmates who had served large portions of their sentences and showed signs of reform.

The quakes on October 7 flattened whole villages in Herat, in one of the most destructive quakes in the country's recent history. More than 90% of people killed a week ago were women and kids. *Agencies*

In a first call with Palestinian Prez, Biden talks support for aid to Gaza

Linking the crisis in Gaza to different versions of hate, the US Prez urges for violence to be stopped

RIYADH

PRESIDENT Joe Biden on Saturday spoke with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, urging the leaders to allow humanitarian aid to the region and affirmed his support for efforts to protect civilians.

Addressing a Human Rights Campaign dinner Saturday in Washington, Biden linked the humanitarian crisis in Gaza to different versions of hate that he said must be stopped.

"A week ago, we saw hate manifest another way in the worst massacre of the Jewish people since the Holocaust," Biden said, citing the 1,300 lives lost in Israel as well as children, grandparents alike kidnapped, held hostage by Hamas. "The humanitarian crisis in Gaza—innocent Palestinian families and the vast majority that have nothing to do with Hamas—they're being used as human shields," he said. "We have to reject hate in every form."

While the US President has spoken to Netanyahu multiple times since the Hamas attack, Saturday's call was his first to Abbas, who runs the Palestinian Authority which controls the West Bank.

According to a readout of the call, Abbas briefed the president on efforts to bring aid to Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza. Biden reiterated to Abbas that "Hamas does not stand for the Palestinian people's right to dignity and self-determination," according to the readout.

Biden spoke with Netanyahu to "reiterate unwavering US support for Israel," as per the readout. He briefed the Israeli leader on regional efforts to ensure civilian access to food, water and medical care.

The weekend calls in Washington came ahead of Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin's announcement that the United States was moving up a second carrier strike group in support of Israel. Secretary of State Antony Blinken intensified diplomatic outreach across the Middle East and beyond to rally an international response to prevent the Israel-Hamas war from expanding.

The number of US citizens killed rose to 29, US officials said on Satutday, and 15 were unaccounted for, and one lawful permanent resident. *AP*

Water has run out at UN shelters across Gaza as thousands packed into the courtyard of the besieged territory's largest hospital as a refuge of last resort from a looming Israeli ground offensive. Doctors feared for the patients' lives dependent on ventilators and those suffering from complex blast wounds needing around-the-clock care. Doctors are worried that entire hospital facilities would be shut and many would die as the last of fuel stocks powering their generators came close to running out. UN humanitarian monitors estimated this could happen by Monday | AP

DAYS' DEVELOPMENTS

One million Gazans displaced, says UN

More than one million people have been displaced in the Gaza Strip in the last week, the UN said on Sunday. Israel declared war on the Islamist group last Sunday, a day after waves of fighters broke through the heavily fortified border and shot, stabbed and burned to death more than 1,400 people.

Invasion can lead to genocide: Arab League

Israel's planned ground invasion of Gaza "could lead to a genocide of unprecedented proportions," the heads of the Arab League and African Union said on Sunday. Both of them called on "the United Nations and the international community to stop a catastrophe unfolding in front of us, before it is too late."

Rally in Indonesia to support Palestinians

More than 2,000 Muslims rallied in Indonesia's capital on Sunday to show solidarity with Palestinians and called for an end to the Israel-Hamas war. Waving Indonesian and Palestinian flags and signs that read "Save Palestinians," they gathered outside Al Azhar Grand Mosque in southern Jakarta.

EXPRESS READ

Six killed in Russian attacks on Ukraine

Kyiv: Six people have been killed in Russian attacks on Ukraine in the past 24 hours, local officials said on Sunday. Two persons were killed and three more injured in the Kherson area after more than 100 shells bombarded the region over the weekend.

Nawaz's party granted permission for rally

Lahore: Pakistan's district administration has given permission to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party to hold a rally on October 21 at Lahore's Minar-e-Pakistan where ex-PM Nawaz Sharif will address supporters on his return.

China, Pakistan to ink vital deals under CPEC projects during PM's Beijing visit

ISLAMABAD

CHINA and Pakistan will ink significant agreements regarding motorways and highways during caretaker PM Anwaarul Haq Kakar's four-day visit to Beijing starting today.

The agreements would be signed under the $60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) programme, *Dawn* reported.

Kakar would travel to Beijing on October 16 to participate in the Third Belt and Road Forum (BRF) for International Cooperation from October 17 to 18.

"The prime minister will attend the opening ceremony of the BRF and address the high-level forum entitled Connectivity in an Open Global Economy," the PM office said in a post on X on Saturday.

A significant Memorandum of Understanding scheduled to be signed is related to the establishment of a modern Highway Research and Training Centre (HRTC) with China's assistance, the paper said. The project will prominently take centre stage during the prime minister's discussion with the Chinese authorities, it added.

Kakar will also sign an MoU to upgrade Karakoram Highway (KKH) from Raikot to Thakot, Raikot to Khunjerab (335 km), KKH phase-2 on the E-35 section from Havelian to Thakot, covering 120 km and introduction of a motorway section connecting Havelian to Mansehra.

In the second phase of the KKH project, the official said, the road would be designed in a way that it would remain operational around the year, especially in winter when it is closed due to heavy snowfall.

The Prime Minister will also discuss the construction of a motorway from Dera Ismail Khan to Zhob, while the Gwadar port will remain the centre of discussion during the meetings in Beijing. *PTI*

Biden raises $71 mn for 2024 race during July-Sept

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Joe Biden and the Democratic National Committee raised over $71 million for his re-election in the three months ending September 30, a strong indication that party donors remain united behind him going into a 2024 race.

Sunday's announcement comes after the Biden campaign and the party reported raising $72-plus million in the 10 weeks between his official campaign announcement on April 25 and the end of the second quarter on June 30.

Both totals include donations to Biden's campaign and to a network of joint fundraising arrangements with the national and state parties. The campaign said Democrats had $91 million in cash on hand through the end of last month, the highest-ever total by a Democrat at this point in an election cycle.

"This quarter's fundraising haul and historic cash on hand speak to the very real enthusiasm and support," Julie Chavez Rodriguez, manager of Biden's reelection campaign, said. "These numbers are a testament to one of our core objectives early in this campaign: raise the resources needed to run an aggressive campaign that will win in November 2024."

The Biden campaign said it doubled its individual contributions since launching to a total of more than 1.4 million, Also, 1,12,000 people have now committed to be sustaining donors, meaning they have promised to continue to contribute every month.

In all, more than 4,93,000 donors made 8,43,000 donations across all Biden and Democratic entities over the quarter, with 97% of donations coming in under $200. Donors also hailed from all 50 states. *AP*

₹9,800 cr have been pulled out by foreign portfolio investors from Indian equities this month so far.

Know about joint bank account, how it works and benefits

Trust factor plays an important role in a joint account as all account holders have equal rights and when required, they can close the account

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

A joint account is like a shared bank account between two people or more, with most banks allowing up to four people to be the joint account holders. It has several benefits, one being it allows easy access to money through debit cards and online banking. Additionally, it simplifies bill payments and helps track expenses.

For couples, financial experts recommend having three accounts. Each partner maintains their own individual account where their income goes, and they transfer a predetermined amount to a joint account regularly. The joint account is used for shared expenses like rent, utilities, groceries, and entertainment. It can also be used for saving money together, such as for emergencies, vacations, or future goals. Having individual accounts allow personal spending and saving without needing to consult the partner every time. It's important to trust each other when depositing money into a joint account, as all account holders have equal rights and can close the account if needed.

Overall, getting a joint account can help couples manage their finances, build trust, and work together towards shared financial goals. Joint accounts can be opened with your parent, spouse, sibling, child or even a business partner.

Kinds of joint accounts

When you open a joint account at a bank, there are some important things to know. Each person has the right to deposit, withdraw, and manage the money in the account. Even though one person may have more control over the account, all account holders have equal rights to the money once it's deposited. It's also important to trust the other account holders because anyone can close the joint account if they want to. This means that when you deposit your hard-earned money into the joint account, you need to trust that the other account holders will handle it responsibly. The way a joint account is operated can be decided by the account holders. There are different options to choose from:

Joint: All transactions in the account must be approved and signed by all the account holders. If one of the account holders dies, the account will be closed, and the bank will pass on the balance in the account to the survivor.

Joint or survivor: All transactions in the account must be approved and signed by all the account holders. If one of the account holders dies, the survivor can continue to operate the account.

Either or survivor: If there are two account holders, either person can operate the account. If one of the account holders passes away, the remaining balance and interest will go to the survivor.

Former or survivor: In this case, only one person, the former, can operate the account while they are alive. After their death, the survivor can take over. If the survivor dies first, the account will be operated solely by the former, and the legal representative of the survivor won't have access to the account.

Anyone or survivor/s: If there are more than two account holders, any of them can operate the account. If one of the account holders passes away, the remaining balance and interest will be given to the surviving account holders.

These mandates can be changed with the agreement of all account holders.

Additionally, if someone wants to authorise another person to operate the account on their behalf, they can give a mandate or power of attorney to the bank.

For fixed-term deposits, instructions can be given about whether to close the account or renew it when it matures.

Pros and Cons

Joint accounts have both advantages and disadvantages. According to Jitendra Solanki, a Sebi-registered investment advisor, "Benefit of Joint account is ease of accessing money when in need. Also, it helps couples to track their cash flows well when expenses are planned jointly. Ideally couples when planning their finances can open a joint account to manage expenses like loan, EMIs. Even NRIs are now allowed to open a joint account with a resident Indian."

But while opening a joint account, you may be exposing yourself to litigation and even financial shock. What if one of your partners in the joint account defaults on a loan or indulges in illegal activities leading to seizure of the joint account. "Joint accounts can be complicated for income tax filing and divorce. It will be cumbersome to find money trail for tax purposes from a joint account," Solanki added.

JOINT ACCOUNTS

PROS

- EASY ACCESS TO MONEY
- Simplified bill payments and expense tracking
- Building trust and shared financial goals
- Flexibility with individual accounts
- CAN OPEN ACCOUNT WITH RELATIVES AND PARTNERS

CONS

- Potential litigation and financial shock
- Complexity in income tax filing and divorce
- Equal rights and trust required
- POTENTIAL DISAGREEMENTS AND CONFLICTS

MONEY MATTERS

WHY YOUR MONEY NEEDS TIME THAN TIMING

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

IT is a time of conflict. After events that shook Israel last weekend, things have flared up in the Middle East. Israel's retaliatory action has put the Gaza Strip in a severe humanitarian crisis. The world was barely making adjustments to the ongoing strife in Ukraine. The new conflict will also likely hurt your money in the long run. Oil and gold prices were quick to react on the way up.

When panic sets in, investors tend to look for safe havens. The US dollar has strengthened significantly against major currencies. All of that puts pressure on global inflation. Central banks raise interest rates or keep them elevated to combat inflationary pressures. That increases the cost of money for individuals and businesses. It could start in areas directly affected by the conflict first. The pain spreads eventually.

The Reserve Bank of India has maintained high-interest rates in India. That is needed to cool down the consumer price inflation in the economy. Your money needs faster economic growth but does not need high inflation. As India heads into a general election in May 2024, there will be further uncertainty on policies as significant decisions will be put on hold.

Many of you investing regularly through mutual funds are quick to press panic buttons. Money is pulled out of risky assets like small and mid-cap stocks. However, mutual funds are a vehicle for the long term. Yet, the Association of Mutual Funds data in India shows that most of you are trying to time the market. Look for a point when prices are low and exit sooner than needed. When there is a threat of war and fear, many of you tend to sell equity assets. While that may be the right thing to do to protect your savings, you need to look for the impact of such a situation carefully before acting on it.

Equity prices move in cycles. They bounce back after they fall. We saw that in the aftermath of COVID-19. A key driver for equity prices is underlying listed companies' business and profit growth. If that is likely consistent, then there is no need for any panic selloff. Your equity assets are meant for the long term. You should not indulge in timing the market. Your equity investment requires time to grow. For that, they need to ride through the market cycles.

Warren Buffett, the legendary American investor, used to say that you should be greedy when others are fearful and fear when others are greedy. Equity markets are not meant for making fast money. No investment is meant for doubling it in quick time. Anybody who promises or says that you can invest and multiply your money in 3-4 years is trying to fool you.

We often talk about the benefits of the power of compounding. If you invest in small amounts regularly for 15-20 years, you can achieve your financial goals and retire rich. However, if you look for the right time to enter or exit, you will end up trading in the market. Buying and selling of equity quickly does not usually result in wealth creation.

You must identify the right businesses and stay invested as long as possible. You can double up on your investments in times of conflict or panic. Taking a leaf out of Warren Buffett's book, you can get greedy when share prices fall in a panic situation. That strategy helps if you invest regularly and have surplus money in the bank. It also helps if you do not withdraw that investment often.

As an individual, it is not easy to keep up with the information that can affect your investments. You can certainly get help from a professional financial advisor to determine appropriate asset allocation. At the same time, some algorithms mine through a lot of information and help you build a portfolio. All major stock brokers offer you an opportunity to invest in a basket of stocks or mutual funds determined after mining data. In modern investment times, there can be no better idea.

Express illustration

MONEY-WISE

SPOTLIGHT ON SMALL AND MID-SIZED BAFS

FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR

Head of LKW-India.
He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com
(Views expressed here are personal)

IN my last column, we had commenced with a discussion on the category of Balanced Advantage Funds (BAF). Let us now proceed to turn the spotlight on a few randomly selected funds with relatively smaller AUMs in this space.

These include Edelweiss Balanced Advantage Fund, HSBC Balanced Advantage Fund, Nippon India Balanced Advantage Fund, Tata Balanced Advantage Fund, DSP Dynamic Asset Allocation Fund and Sundaram Balanced Advantage Fund.

Edelweiss Balanced Advantage Fund has an AUM of ₹ 9,392 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 63% in Equity, 17% in Arbitrage and 20% in Debt. Its top equity holdings are in the Financial Services, IT and Consumer goods sectors. The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-years and 5-years time period are 11.18%, 14.42% and 12.31%, respectively.

HSBC Balanced Advantage Fund has an AUM of ₹1,374 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 47% in Equity, 20% in Arbitrage and 33% in Debt. Its top equity holdings are in the Government Securities, Banks and Pharmaceutical & Biotechnology sectors. The performances of this fund over a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year time period are 11.10%, 8.54% and 8.30%, respectively.

Nippon India Balanced Advantage Fund has an AUM of ₹6,957 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 45% in Equity, 23% in Arbitrage and 32% in Debt. Its top equity holdings are in the Banks, IT Software and Diversified FMCG sectors. The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year time period are 10.62%, 13.98% and 10.26%, respectively.

Tata Balanced Advantage Fund has an AUM of ₹7,476 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 51% in Equity, 15% in Arbitrage and 35% in Debt. Its top equity holdings are in the Agricultural Food, Automobiles and Banks sectors. The performances of this fund over a 1-year and 3-year time period are 11.78% and 13.84%, respectively.

DSP Dynamic Asset Allocation Fund has an AUM of ₹3,398 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 40% in Equity, 25% in Arbitrage and 35% in Debt. Its top equity holdings are in the Auto Components, Banks and Finance sectors. The performances of this fund over a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year time period are 9.32%, 9.30% and 8.76%, respectively.

Sundaram Balanced Advantage Fund has an AUM of ₹1,533 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 57% in Equity, 10% in Arbitrage and 33% in Debt. Its top equity holdings are in the Banks, IT Software and Automobiles sectors. The performances of this fund over a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year time period are 9.52%, 11.75% and 10.16%, respectively.

While past records do not in any way guarantee future performance, the discernible trend hitherto is that BAFs have lived up to their positioning as a Fixed Deposit Plus product.

To select the right BAF that matches an investors specific requirement though, is best left to an expert.

IIHL asked to submit new plan for Rel Cap buy

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

The resolution of Reliance Capital insolvency case could hit a roadblock after the insurance regulator – Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) – rejected Hinduja Group-led IIHL's proposal to raise funds by pledging shares of Reliance General Insurance and Reliance Nippon Life Insurance.

IIHL, which emerged as the successful resolution applicant, wanted to raise this fund to acquire Reliance Capital.

Sources told TNIE that after the IRDAI rejection, Reliance Capital administrator has asked IIHL to submit a fresh application, along with the source of funds and the business plan which does not include the creation of pledge over the shares of the two insurance arms of the company. IRDAI has indicated that no application for change in control would be considered favourably if the source of the funds for the acquisition contemplates creation of pledge over the shares of an insurance company. Sources said that Hinduja Group had proposed to raise a debt of $850 million from the leading foreign funds and banks to fund the acquisition of Reliance Capital Ltd.

Hinduja Group had proposed to raise this debt against the assets of Reliance Capital, which primarily includes Reliance Capital's 100% stake in Reliance General Insurance and 51% stake in Reliance Nippon Life Insurance. These two assets constitute more than 90% of the value of Reliance Capital. IIHL had sought an approval from the Insurance Regulator for the change in control of the ownership of RGIC & RNLIC and creation of pledge over their shares to raise funds from the investors. IRDAI's approval is necessary for the completion of the successful resolution of Reliance Capital.

According to sources, IIHL was in talks with a clutch of US-based banks -- JP Morgan, Barclays Bank, Brookfield, Cerberus Capital, Apollo – as also Singapore's Oaktree for its $850 million fund raise. Lenders of Reliance Capital had voted in favour of the resolution plan submitted by IIHL with a 99.6% vote share. As per IIHL's resolution plan, the lenders will receive an upfront cash of ₹9,661 crore from Hinduja group-backed successful resolution applicant. Torrent Investment, which was also in the race to acquire the erstwhile Anil Ambani-led company, lost the bid to IIHL, after it stayed out of the second round of the auction. In the first round of auction, Torrent Investments had offered to pay ₹8,640 crore, while IIHL had put a bid of ₹ 8,110 crore. But both the amounts were far below the liquidation value (₹13,000 crore) of Reliance Capital.

bankrupt
bankruptcy
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discharge period
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insolvency
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Resolution plan

As per IIHL's resolution plan, the lenders will receive an upfront cash of ₹9,661 crore from Hinduja group-backed successful resolution applicant. Torrent Investment, which was also in the race to acquire the company, lost the bid to IIHL, after it stayed out of the second round of the auction.

Flipkart's shopping fest sees 1.4 bn visits

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Bengaluru

The 10th edition of The Big Billion Days (TBBD) witnessed 1.4 billion customer visits over early access and seven days of the shopping festival, which concluded on Sunday.

New on-app experiences such as Flippi (a Chat GPT-powered shopping assistant), Vibes (video-led browsing experience) and SPOYL (Gen Z Fashion experience), saw great traction, with about 4X increase in engagement compared to the pre-festive period, the ecommerce company said.

Kalyan Krishnamurthy, CEO, Flipkart Group, said the company created one lakh new job opportunities across supply chain, including fulfillment centers, sortation centers and delivery hubs.

Bengaluru, Hyderabad and New Delhi drove the highest demand for small appliances such as Juicer Mixer and Electric Kettles, and 4k Televisions in the large segment, the company said.

Bribe-for-jobs probe: TCS fires 16 employees

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Bengaluru

After nearly six-months probe, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has concluded its investigation into the bribe-for-jobs scandal, and fired 16 employees.

In its filings to the exchanges, TCS on Sunday said its investigation found 19 employees to be involved and action has been taken against all of them. While 16 employees have been separated from the company for code of conduct violations, three employees have been removed from the Resource Management function. "Also, 6 vendor entities, their owners and affiliates have been debarred from doing any business with TCS," it said.

The company also said that it would continue to enhance its governance measures including regular rotation of personnel performing key roles in the Resource Management function and vendor management process audits, among others. "We would like to reiterate (i) that this does not involve any fraud by or against the Company and there is no financial impact; (ii) the issue relates to breach of Company's Code of Conduct by certain employees and vendors supplying contractors; and (iii) no key managerial person of the Company has been found to be involved," the company added. Earlier in June, in the company's AGM, TCS Chairman N Chandrasekaran had said the company received two whistleblower complaints towards end-February and March.

"The complaints were about certain favouritism being done and favours being received in recruitment of BAs(business associates)," he said.

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Every game almost like a final: Cummins

Lucknow: Skipper Pat Cummins said Australia are fired up to perform against teams that they have done well against in the recent past. "We're obviously 0-2, so we've got to start winning and start winning quick. Every game now becomes almost like a final," Cummins said, on the eve of clash against Sri Lanka.

It felt really good to bowl them (Pakistan) out for 191 after they were 155/2. It's a great comeback as a bowling unit. We came hunting in pairs and captured a couple of wickets each. — Ravindra Jadeja, India all-rounder

Hosts' bowlers have been hunting in packs, thereby stifling rival batters and finding success in the process

India's potent bowling unit

GOMESH S @ Ahmedabad

MOHAMMED Siraj was candid on Saturday night. Inadvertently, he also described life as an elite-level cricketer. "When you go to office, you also have an off day sometimes," he said. "It cannot always be the same performance. The graph comes down. So, I think to myself that I am not a bad bowler because of one match," he added.

The query here was about him not being in rhythm in New Delhi and in the first spell in Ahmedabad. The point to note is that India have taken 28 wickets in three games so far in the World Cup. In fact, they have dismissed their opponents 15 times in 24 games in 2023. Such has been the impact created by the bowling unit that Siraj (33) and Kuldeep Yadav (38) are among the top three wicket-takers in ODIs this year. Hardik Pandya (21), Ravindra Jadeja (20) and Mohammed Shami (19) aren't far behind.

The aforementioned names in itself forms a bowling unit that would make many teams jealous. That's before you throw in one of the best at the moment — Jasprit Bumrah (16 in 8 innings this year) — along with R Ashwin (5 in 3 innings) and Shardul Thakur (20 in 14 games). Suffice to say that the hosts have the strongest bowling attack for subcontinental conditions.

Bumrah and Siraj are odds on to make a dent in the first ten overs. If they don't, Pandya or Kuldeep will. And when things are going against India, Thakur often seems to be the one to break partnerships. There aren't many spinners in the world who could provide the control that Jadeja and Ashwin would in Indian conditions. Their economy in the middle overs (10-40) since 2022 says it all — Siraj (4.91), Kuldeep (4.68), Bumrah (4.42) and Jadeja (4.64).

Jasprit Bumrah has led from the front and is the leading wicket-taker so far

The thing is, they understand how good they are as a unit as well. They know what they are doing even when it might look like they are not on top. Take the Pakistan clash. Siraj and Rohit Sharma set up Abdullah Shafique's dismissal by pushing him on the back foot before bowling a fuller one. Later, Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan were keeping the scorecard moving. Even then, Kuldeep and Jadeja provided immaculate control with their lines and lengths before pressure eventually caught up to the Pakistan duo. "I thought they would try to sweep as they are known to play that shot. But they didn't take a chance but that extra over that I bowled after discussing with the skipper, both wickets came in that over," Kuldeep said about the dismissals of Saud Shakeel and Iftikhar Ahmed.

It is not just about Siraj, Kuldeep or Bumrah. They come in and hunt as a pack. On Saturday, barring Thakur, they shared the wickets equally among them. "If you don't get a wicket, you're building pressure. When Jassi (Bumrah) bowls the ball, you can see what line is better on the wicket. It becomes easier to execute," said Siraj after the match.

Even as they continue to thrive with different options covered for different conditions, it is not unfair to say that they are playing it safe with Thakur in the playing XI. The medium-pacer bowled six overs in New Delhi and two in Ahmedabad, averaging 43 with an economy of 5.37. Former Indian cricketer and Gujarat Titans assistant coach Aashish Kapoor feels that India should have either Ashwin or Shami in the XI in place of Thakur. "You have most of your bases covered as long as the bowlers are bowling okay. If two bowlers have a bad day, things could go south," he says.

"You can't go with two medium-pacers and on a pitch like Saturday, Shami could have been more effective and if the pitch was slow and if you didn't want Shami, maybe Ashwin should have played. Your bases are covered, but you need to make the most of it. On Saturday, Thakur bowled two overs in the first 20 and didn't bowl after. He was the captain's sixth option, coming in as the fourth change. If you are looking at him as a sixth bowler batting at No. 8, what is he doing in the XI? I have nothing against that boy (Thakur)... these days he gets wickets only when someone goes after him," said Kapoor.

India still have six league games to go. The bowlers could be rested and rotated against different opponents. What will be interesting to see is whether they still stick with Thakur or bring back one of Shami/Ashwin come the business end.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

DID YOU KNOW? WORLD CUP TRIVIA

Australia and Sri Lanka have played each other in 2 World Cup finals — 1996 and 2007. Sri Lanka won in 1996 and Australia won in 2007.

England's WC defence in tatters after 2nd loss

ENS @ New Delhi

ENGLAND's defence of the World Cup is in tatters. On Sunday, they came unstuck against Afghanistan in a manner that was wholly predictable but still surprising. Before delving into their chase, a word on the Afghans who picked up only their second 50-over World Cup win (and first since edging past Scotland in the 2015 edition) since making their debut in Australia and New Zealand eight years ago.

Afghanistan's Rashid Khan (C) celebrates a wicket on Sunday | AP

Afghanistan got off to the perfect start, courtesy Rahmanullah Gurbaz's 80 off 57. Even though Adil Rashid, Liam Livingstone and Joe Root put the skids on the scoring, the pacers were taken for plenty. While the spin troika gave away 5/94 from their 24 overs, the pacers were dispatched. Afghanistan with their own spinners knew they had a chance of defending 285. Once Fazalhaq Farooqi scalped Jonny Bairtstow, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Mohammed Nabi and, later, Rashid Khan, tighetened the screws. None of them are big turners but they didn't err in line or length.

Joe Root lost his stumps while Liam Livingstone was caught in front. With half the side back in the pavillion inside 21 overs, the spinners asphyxiated the lower-order. While Harry Brook provided some resistance, Rashid, Nabi and Mujeeb kept chipping away at the edifice. From 125/5, Rashid and Nabi bowled 17 dot balls and conceded zero boundaries. The wickets came soon after as Sam Curran, Chris Woakes and Brook fell, all to spin. The epilogue followed and the smiles plastered on the faces of the Afghan cricketers told its own story.

Brief scores: Afghanistan 284 in 49.5 ovs (Gurbaz 80, Ikram 58; A Rashid 3/42) **bt** England 215 in 40.3 ovs (Brook 66, Malan 32; Rashid Khan 3/37, Mujeeb 3/51).

HIGH-STAKES CLASH

Both Australia and Sri Lanka, yet to win a game between them, are in almost in a must-not-lose scenario. A look at their match-up at Lucknow...

BOWLING LINE-UPS IN FOCUS

Both bowling attacks haven't been at their best. While Sri Lanka have given away 428 and 345 in their two matches, Australia have picked up only 11 wickets across their two matches. Not good enough.

AUSTRALIA'S TOP-ORDER

In a tournament where a lot of top-orders have clicked, Australia are yet to get into top gear. Against South Africa, they lost half their side inside the first 17 overs. When facing India, they lost the first five wickets for 119 inside 30 overs.

SRI LANKA'S COMBINATION

With Dasun Shanaka ruled out, what will their combination be? Against Pakistan, they let themselves badly in the field but their batting has been decent, having compiled scores in excess of 325 in both games. Will they be able to find an x-factor in the bowling unit?

TODAY'S GAME: AUSTRALIA VS SRI LANKA, LUCKNOW, 2.00 PM

Live on Star Sports Network/Hotstar

Slow & unsteady: What's eating Pakistan in the middle-overs

GOMESH S @ Ahmedabad

JUST before the World Cup began, Pakistan team director Mickey Arthur had spoken about the brand of cricket they wanted to play. Pakistan, unlike a few other teams, haven't entirely embraced the new era of batting in the middle overs since the last World Cup. For Arthur, it is a work in progress.

"That's something that we're trying to get through to our players. The players have embraced it. It's going to take a little bit of time, but I always say there's always two ways to skin a cat," he had said before adding that they are playing a brand that is particular to Pakistan and hoping that it could help them win a World Cup. Three games — two wins and a loss — later Pakistan are still not there yet. After the seven-wicket defeat against India on Saturday, Arthur once again reflected on the brand of batting and said that they have not played the Pakistani way they wanted to and failed to execute the plans against the Indian bowling attack. What was the plan? He did not divulge into the details. But here's what happened in the game.

After 11 overs, Pakistan had strolled to 60/1 (over 5.4 RPO), taking on Mohammed Siraj and playing out Jasprit Bumrah, forcing Rohit Sharma to bring on the spinners, especially Kuldeep Yadav. After Hardik Pandya snaffled Imam-up-Haq following a very loose shot, Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam came together.

RUN-RATE IN OVERS 10-30 SINCE 2022 (BATTING FIRST)

Team	RPO
England	6.1
India	5.91
South Africa	5.57
Australia	5.54
Sri Lanka	5.08
New Zealand	5.04
Pakistan	4.98
Bangladesh	4.8
Afghanistan	4.56
Netherlands	4.54

The stage was set for two of the most experienced batters to rebuild. However, both Azam and Rizwan kept nudging the ball here and there with not much pro-active hitting. Granted, some bad balls were smashed as Azam on-drove Shardul Thakur. But Ravindra Jadeja bowled wicket to wicket and the pacers kept hitting the lengths with the Pakistan duo not doing enough to disrupt the bowlers' plans. They just went along, happy to not force India's hand; 61 runs were added between overs 11 and 27 (3.81 RPO). Sensing the pressure, Sharma brought back Siraj who went for a couple of boundaries as Azam brought up his fifty. Siraj, however, had the last laugh as he cleaned up Azam in his next over. Kuldeep piled on with two wickets in the next over. Rizwan, on the other end, was stuck in his 40s. He went from 42 off 53 balls to 49 off 69 before being outdone by a genius slower ball from Bumrah. Just like that, Pakistan had crumbled yet again. They lost their last eight wickets for 36 runs — a blow from which they never recovered.

This is not something new though. There is a clear pattern. Since 2022, Pakistan's run-rate in overs 10-30 is 5.2. It might not look all that bad, but when you dissect it to see how they fare while batting first, the number drops down to 4.98.

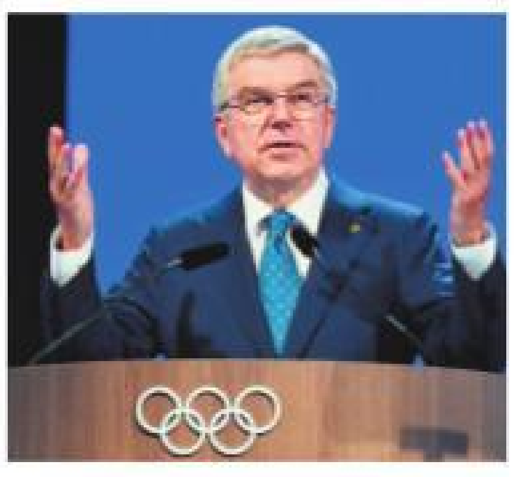
As India eye '36 Oly, IOC outlines bidding process

INDRANEEL DAS @ Mumbai

THE roads were unusually quiet at the Bandra-Kural Complex (BKC) on Sunday. There were quite a few flags and flexes around the Jio World Convention Centre where the first day of the 141st IOC Session was taking place. There were quite a few discussions and presentations, some open to the audience, while others were behind closed doors.

However, from an Indian perspective, the buzz was all about hosting the Olympics in 2036. The storyline was determined the moment Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched India's interest during the Opening Ceremony on Saturday. There was no escaping the obvious question — it's not about when but how. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) treaded as cautiously as possible whenever such questions were posed to them. The body's director of communications, Mark Adams, who has been following the nuances of bidding for a while, along with Christian Klaue, director, corporate communications, explained in detail the process of showing interest and the next step.

To put it straight, Adams said the intent or interest has to be shown by the National Olympic Committee (NOC), in this case the Indian Olympic Association (IOA). "Theoretically, the entire bid process has to come through the National Olympic Committee of the country, in which case it's the Indian Olympic Association (IOA). They would approach us saying that we have an interest and then we will initiate a dialogue."



IOC chief Thomas Bach on the first day of the 141st IOC Session in Mumbai | AFP

Adams also said that there are about 10 countries that have shown interest so far. One doesn't have to announce its interest publicly. "The important thing for 2036 is that there are more than 10 countries interested. You don't have to announce it publicly. They will contact us and show their interest and we will start the initial conversation. Then we will enter into a dialogue. Eventually, at some stage, the commission will propose it to the Executive Board (EB) saying that they would go into an open dialogue with x or y or z cities."

The IOC also said that it would ask the countries or cities who are interested to host the Olympics to approach them for advice. That will help them reduce the cost considerably. They cited the case of Brisbane where the expenses were curtailed by more than 50 per cent.

Adams said that since they have the expertise, they would ask the interested parties to approach IOC for advice instead of hiring different firms or companies for helping them out with projects. "We can discuss with India too, whichever city or cities it might be, whatever interest the city or region or country or state has and what they are trying to achieve. Then, together, we would like to construct a proposal. "The first would be continuous dialogue in whatever way, accompanying and helping potential interested parties to build a good case to see if they can hold the Games," another IOC spokesperson said.

On sustainability of the Games, Adams said: "For Paris, 95 per cent of the venues were already in existence or temporary. In the 2028 LA Games, everything is already there. They did not have to build a single thing for the Games. But that doesn't mean that you have a very good legacy. Paris are building the Games Village and the swimming pool and saying that they can have a very good long term legacy with those.

"If a few of the cities in India say that 'we want to really improve our sporting infrastructure', we are going to invest the money anyway. That won't stop the bid. What we are working on is trying to find what works. That will be different from what works in India and Indonesia," he said.

"There is no pre-requisite for starting any process. We are really trying to change it. We really want to work out what is best for you. Whereas in the past, we said 'look here are the rules, you bid'. But that's not how it works for the organisers."

On Youth Olympics Games, which the PM said India would host in 2030, Adams said the process is completely different.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Fully-functional IOA must for initiating bid

INDRANEEL DAS @ Mumbai

THE Prime Minister on Saturday had said India would like to host the 2036 Olympic Games. Though the interest to host the Games has the government backing, the bid or interest has to be initiated by the National Olympic Committee (NOC); in this case the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

However, the IOA has time and again been warned by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to follow its newly-amended constitution and appoint a Chief Executive Officer. In fact, the constitution was vetted by the IOC and was aligned with the IOC Charter. Because of this, the IOC is yet to meet officials from the IOA and all communications, as reported by this newspaper, is with IOA president PT Usha in the absence of a CEO. As of now, India is staring down the barrel because of this. There are indications that IOC may not hesitate to penalise. Some even say this could lead to sanctions or even suspension.

Even during the IOC Session and its Executive Board meetings here since Tuesday, there have been meetings with the IOC who once again reminded IOA to appoint a CEO. The IOA president in fact had a meeting with IOC chief Thomas Bach on Wednesday. Interestingly, there was a meeting with the IOC on Saturday too where almost all the Executive Committee members were present and the appointment of CEO was discussed.

The IOA apparently has been given one month's time to sort out the mess. It is understood that a section of the IOA wants certain provision of the constitution to be diluted to appoint a CEO because they have not got enough response first time they advertised for the post in January. This time it is understood that the IOA is serious about the appointment. As of now, joint secretary Kalyan Chaubey is the acting CEO.

"...as far as the IOC is concerned, all communications are addressed to the IOA President, in the absence of a duly appointed CEO," the IOC had said to this daily earlier. If the IOA doesn't appoint a CEO, relationship with the IOC might deteriorate. For a successful bid, there is a necessity of a fully functional IOA.

Bagnaia topper in Indonesia

AGENCIES @ Indonesia

ITALY'S Francesco Bagnaia won the Indonesia MotoGP on Sunday with a spectacular ride that took him back to the top of the championship standings after rival Jorge Martin crashed out.

Maverick Vinales (Aprilia) came in a close second behind the 26-year-old Ducati star, with Fabio Quartararo (Yamaha) in third. Bagnaia made a mesmerising surge from 13th to the top spot after rising to the podium places within the first four laps, refusing to let Pramac's Martin punish him further for a poor performance in practice and qualifying.

Scandal-hit Italy maintain Euro push with big win

AGENCIES @ Milan

BELEAGUERED Italy bounced back from a scandal-hit week on Saturday by cruising to a 4-0 win over Malta which maintained second place in Euro 2024 qualifying Group C.

Domenico Berardi's double, Giacomo Bonaventura's first Italy goal and a late strike from Davide Frattesi gave the European champions an expected win against rock-bottom Malta to reclaim the second automatic qualifying spot from Ukraine who beat North Macedonia 2-0 earlier in the day.

Italy's Domenico Berardi (2nd R) scores against Malta on Sunday | AP

Luciano Spalletti's side are level on 10 points with Ukraine and three points behind leaders England ahead of Tuesday's key clash at Wembley where the Azzurri won the last Euro just over two years ago. "That match is where we will really see how much potential we have," said Spalletti.

Italy will return to the site of their greatest triumph since winning the 2006 World Cup while Ukraine face sorry Malta in Ta' Qali. Malta are yet to register a single point after six matches in the five-team group and on the basis of Saturday's showing are unlikely to put up much resistance against Ukraine. That means anything but another victory over England will likely leave Italy third ahead of their final two matches in November — North Macedonia in Rome and Ukraine in Leverkusen, although they have a game in hand on both.

"It will definitely be emotional, I have amazing memories from that stadium," said Berardi, who netted a penalty in Italy's shoot-out final win over England.

Saturday's results: Group C: Ukraine **2-0** North Macedonia; Italy **4-0** Malta. **Group G:** Bulgaria **0-2** Lithuania; Hungary **2-1** Serbia; **Group H:** Northern Ireland **3-0** San Marino; Slovenia **3-0** Finland; Denmark **3-1** Kazakhstan.

EXPRESS READ

Hurkacz pockets Shanghai Masters title

SHANGHAI: Hubert Hurkacz claimed his second Masters title in a dramatic final at the Shanghai Masters on Sunday, saving a match point before prevailing 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (8) against Andrey Rublev. The Polish player's serve was again his strike weapon as he sent down 21 aces and won more than 80% of his first serve points.

Ebenyo, Ayana top Delhi Half Marathon

NEW DELHI: World Championship silver medallist Daniel Ebenyo and Rio Olympics champion Almaz Ayana won the men's and women's elite races, respectively, at the Delhi Half Marathon here on Sunday. Ebenyo finished the men's race in 59 minutes and 27 seconds.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
VISAKHAPATNAM, MONDAY
16.10.2023

UPCOMING EXAMINATIONS

JAIIB 2023
Date: October 29, 2023

TS SET 2023
Date: October 28, 29 & 30, 2023

UPSSSC PET 2023
Date: October 28 & 29, 2023

'Tis the season of business! Students in India are approaching quite a crucial juncture as the management examinations are on in full swing. The Common Aptitude Test (CAT) is scheduled for November 26. Being one of the most important and commonly preferred exams, CAT reigns supreme. Even if your dreams of cracking the CAT are dashed, you can still pursue a management course at top premier institutes of the country. **Lovely Majumdar** finds out how

KNOWING YOUR LIMITATIONS

HOW TO START & WHERE TO STOP

IN India, there are several examinations apart from the Common Aptitude Test (CAT) such as the NMIMS Management Test (NMAT), the Common Management Aptitude Test (CMAT), the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) and many others conducted exclusively by the institutions.

However, a question lurks as to how aware are students of the other management exams that provide admission to various colleges. *EdexLive* spoke to experts, counsellors, students and working professionals who are MBA graduates about how one can make mindful choices before pursuing their degree.

A PRECARIOUS SELECTION

Nirvan Gandhi, Founder of Applicant-X, an MBA consulting firm, says that it is pertinent to consider choosing the right management degree and the suitable entry route to explore all diverse options. For example, he adds that students can choose to pursue a two-year MBA course that requires them to appear for CAT, NMAT and other exams, whereas, there are schools that offer a one-year MBA programme, where scores of exams such as GMAT are required. Unlike these traditional MBAs, there is the option of 'deferred MBA', a route through which students can apply to the MBA programme

1. Develop refined planning skills
2. Find suitable entry routes
3. Explore diverse options
4. Assess yourself
5. Seek expert assistance

A deferred MBA guarantees the student admission into the MBA programme while they are studying but would then require them to work for a minimum of two years before they join the programme

Nirvan Gandhi, Founder, Applicant-X

BLIND CHASE

Students usually undergo a series of conflicts that can be influenced by various factors such as personal desires or peer influence. This might lead to an endless pursuit gradually inching towards dissatisfaction, says the Applicant X founder. "The student psyche often oscillates between aspirations and realities and many fixate on prestigious B-Schools, believing that attending them will guarantee success," he says.

Gandhi emphasises that a more prudent strategy for introspection can often yield greater benefits. This is because every student possesses a distinct skill set, and B-Schools nurture a range of talents. For instance, few students excel in entrepreneurship, others in finance. Hence, students should focus on schools where their skills find resonance. "Even a lesser-known B-School might offer the environment needed to nurture their talents," asserts Gandhi

1. Don't get influenced easily
2. Introspect calmly
3. Identify your skill sets
4. Look for compatible B-Schools
5. Have knowledge of reality

Being selective and not following my goals recklessly allowed me to align my career goals with the specialisation offered by the college

Aryan Sharma, Associate Consultant, Capgemini

NEED TO KEEP A CHECK?

While speaking to Shubhankar Sarkar, an aspirant who is a recent Mechanical Engineering graduate of the Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IIEST) Shibpur, said that although he is aware of the OMETS (Other Management Entrance Tests), his sole focus is to get into IIMs (Indian Institutes of Management).

While students do generally aim for the best colleges, experts say that self-assessment is quite important when it comes to coming to terms with your abilities. Buttressing the fact, Dr MH Sharieff, Professor of Practice of JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), CMS Business School, says, "Students can increase their chance of success by selecting examinations that best match their skills, interests and career ambitions by being aware of their limits"

1. Increase self-awareness
2. Appear for exams/tests
3. Set realistic goals
4. Measure your limitations
5. Survey other relational elements

I have appeared for CAT before and passed with a 97 percentile. Although I faced rejection in the interview round, it has given me a chance for further improvement

Shubhankar Sarkar, Aspirant

IS THE PATH EASY?

"I attempted CAT twice while I was working and then I resumed my preparation after quitting work momentarily. What helped me was shortlisting exams and colleges and having backups," mentions Ujjwal, who is working as a Senior Consultant with Capgemini. His journey is a reminder of how the path can be "demanding", as XIMB Professor Bahinipati quotes, "If you think that the path to MBA is easy then the degree isn't worth it." Prof Bahinipati further reminds students to understand the right application of knowledge and how to adapt to situations

1. Remember what you are passionate about/Motivate yourself
2. The path is demanding
3. Maintain dynamism
4. Strengthen intellectual capacity
5. Gear yourself to work under pressure

Juggling between academic, personal and professional obligations will be demanding, but a student will be offered myriad possibilities of networking and constant growth in their career

Dr MH Sharieff, Professor of Practice, (JAIN Deemed-to-be University)

ARE STUDENTS AWARE?

Ujjwal Madaan, an alumnus of TA Pai Management Institute, Manipal, was granted admission via his Xavier Aptitude Test (XAT) scores. While speaking about OMETS, he said that the goal he had was to ace the exams he was preparing for and keep his options open. Shubhankar, who is a Graduate Engineer Trainee at Maruti Suzuki India, aims only for IIMs and as an alternative, he would continue as a professional in the automobile industry. But if he is unable to get an IIM seat, he might prefer a reputed B-School

1. Keep a focused mind
2. Do not limit your options
3. Choose your interests
4. Analyse your chances
5. Use digital sources wisely

Students now believe and work upon the 'chance phenomena' where they appear for tests and engage with the process to understand the mechanism, rather than simply calculating their chances

Professor Bikram Bahinipati, Xavier Institute of Management

Students, therefore, can readily choose MBA as a career option and can also keep other avenues open simultaneously understanding themselves and being conscious of their own limitations in order to be able to fare effectively and productively

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EXAM ESSENTIALS

When you crack these exams, they unlock various doors to prestigious management institutes. We explore three of them here

exam point

NMIMS Management Aptitude Test

NMAT

"Earlier, NMIMS was the only institute that used NMAT. Now, over 50 B-Schools accept it," says **Gaurav Srivastava**, Regional Director, South Asia, Middle East & Africa, Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), the body that conducts the examination

How has the exam evolved?
NMAT is gaining popularity since GMAC acquired it from NMIMS (Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies) in 2015. NMAT provides unique serious-minded candidates. It has become similar to the GMAT in approach, and is one of the most value-added exams, as it focuses on candidates' convenience.

Where do you see the exam when compared to CAT?
Both exams are different. CAT acts as an eliminating exam, serving the purpose of top IIMs. But NMAT is not about elimination; it helps schools get desirable candidates and helps candidates get into B-Schools of their choice.

What kind of job opportunities await students?
Depending on their performance, students would be placed by the schools. NMAT is not meant for seeking jobs, however, it helps schools make an unbiased judgment.

EVERY EXAM NEEDS A STRATEGY

3 TIPS

- You need to have a good study plan, with a well-defined timetable.
- Practice with purpose. Work on your weak areas. The more you practice, the more confidence you gain, and the better your performance.
- Time management is crucial. Attempt the maximum, preferably, all the questions in the given time frame should be aimed for

WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCEDURE?

- Visit B-School websites, find out the selection process for courses
- The selection process varies from B-School to B-School
- Few conduct group discussions and interviews after NMAT

73 EXAM CENTRES ACROSS INDIA

October 10 to December 19 EXAM DATES

2 HOURS EXAM DURATION

MBA.COM STUDY MATERIAL

OPTION OF TAKING IT ONLINE
Students can take their NMAT test online as well. There is no difference between the online and offline tests

SCORING PROCESS
When it comes to the scoring process of NMAT, students are scored between 36-360 marks

STUDENT SPEAKS

I found the test to be moderately difficult, as expected, as it is an adaptive test like GMAT. The quantitative aptitude section was a bit challenging, as it involved a wide range of topics. Overall, the test was interesting and different from other entrance tests. The preparation time was 85 days, which served as an advantage, as I could manage other exams

Raghav Gupta, First-year MBA student, NMIMS Indore

Symbiosis National Aptitude Test

SNAP

The first step to gaining admission into programmes of Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is clearing the Symbiosis National Aptitude (SNAP) Test. We speak to **Dr Ramakrishnan Raman,** Director of the Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune for more insights

How has the exam evolved?
SNAP was created to consolidate admissions into educational institutions of Symbiosis under one entry point. As a result, clearing SNAP makes one eligible for a variety of courses – hence the popularity. Also, SNAP is easier in comparison with CAT. For starters, the duration is one hour.

Where do you see SNAP when compared to CAT?
Based on data, we can say that the SNAP Test is the second-largest MBA admissions exam. Unlike CAT, it does not have sectional cutoffs. One doesn't have to attempt all sections.

What kind of job opportunities await students?
Symbiosis institutes offer various niche and specialised programmes beyond the standard Finance, Business Development, and Marketing MBAs. Companies know exactly what they are looking for in candidates, and Symbiosis gives them that.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

3 ROUNDS

1. SNAP Test
2. Group Exercise (GE)
3. Personal Interaction

- Category-wise merit lists and waiting lists will be made based on the candidates' performance in these rounds, and waiting lists will be made subject to the availability of seats
- Admission is provisional and will be confirmed on payment and meeting the eligibility criteria of the respective programmes

MARKS & MORE

Total number of marks	60
Scaled down to	50
Number of sections	03

84 TEST CENTRES ACROSS INDIA

MARKS BREAKDOWN

General English (Reading Comprehension, Verbal Reasoning, Verbal Ability)	15 marks
Analytical & Logical Reasoning	25 marks
Quantitative, Data Interpretation & Data Sufficiency	25 marks

1 HOUR TEST DURATION

Negative marking: 25% for each wrong answer (25% of 1 = 0.25)

RECOMMENDED STUDY MATERIAL

- A Modern Approach to Verbal & Non-Verbal Reasoning, RS Aggarwal (S Chand)
- A Modern Approach to Logical Reasoning, Dr RS Aggarwal (S Chand)
- How to Prepare for Logical Reasoning for CAT, Arun Sharma (McGraw Hill India)

STUDENT SPEAKS

Two of my strategies to crack SNAP are firstly, divide time amongst sections wisely since you can attempt sections in any order and you can switch between the sections, unlike other MBA exams. Secondly, make speed your strength. SNAP is primarily a speed-based exam, wherein, you must attempt the maximum number of questions

Muskan Dhiman, SIBM Pune (2023-25)

Xavier Aptitude Test

XAT

Xavier Aptitude Test (XAT) distinguishes itself from CAT in several ways. XAT Convenor **Dr Rahul Shukla** says, "While both assess quantitative and verbal abilities, XAT focusses on logical and analytical skills with decision-making capabilities." Here's more from his perspective

How has the exam evolved?
The surge in the number of applicants is a testament to XAT's popularity. It now attracts a diverse pool of candidates, including experienced professionals, showcasing its broad and inclusive appeal.

Where do you see the exam when compared to CAT?
XAT introduces the Decision Making (DM) section, presenting candidates with real-world scenarios, demanding subjective decisions. Moreover, XAT includes an Analytical Essay Writing (AEW) section; Poem Comprehension section; General Knowledge (GK) section and a different negative marking scheme, making it a multi-faceted assessment.

What kind of job opportunities await students?
With an MBA from XLRI, one can venture into government and public service or non-profit sector. Data analytics is another thriving avenue and so is entrepreneurship.

WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT DATES THAT STUDENTS SHOULD KEEP IN MIND?

TILL NOV 30, 2023 REGISTRATION OPEN

₹2,100 EXAM FEE INCREASED

ADMIT CARD FROM DECEMBER 20

XLRI Jamshedpur seats **for PGDM BM increased to 240 from earlier 180**

XLRI Delhi NCR campus seats **for PGDM BM increased to 180**

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
Applicants must hold a recognised bachelor's degree with minimum duration of three years or its equivalent in any discipline

Candidates completing their final examinations by JUNE 10, 2024 are also eligible to apply

All Indian candidates are eligible to appear for XAT 2024. However, NRI and foreign candidates may apply using either their GMAT score or XAT

STUDY MATERIALS
To enhance your preparation, review previous question papers, which are conveniently available at *www.xatonline.in*

3 ESSENTIAL TIPS

- Cultivate strong self-belief
- Master fundamental concepts
- Develop sectional proficiency

2.30 HOURS EXAM DURATION

WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCEDURE?

- Shortlisting Based on XAT Exam Score
- Group Discussion and Personal Interview (GDPI)
- Final Admission Process
- Final Admission Offer

200 TEST CENTRES ACROSS INDIA

STUDENT SPEAKS

Even though a few sections are additional, like decision-making and general knowledge, with minimum effort, you can appear for XAT and do decently well. When I appeared for the test, I realised the questions were not that difficult. It was not about difficulty of content but more about how you manage your time and apply your strategy

Shivapriya, XLRI (Batch 2022-24)